CLEVELAND OPPORTUNITY CORRIDOR
OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

the CLEVELAND OPPORTUNITY CORRIDOR PROJECT

Draft Environmental Impact Statement

AUGUST 2013

STATE OF OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

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FHWA-OH-EIS-13-01-D

CLEVELAND OPPORTUNITY CORRIDOR PROJECT CUY – OPPORTUNITY CORRIDOR, PID 77333 City of Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Submitted Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 4332 (2) (c) and 49 U.S.C. 303

By the

U.S. Department of Transportation – Federal Highway Administration – Ohio Division, and the Ohio Department of Transportation, as Joint Lead Agencies pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 1 39(c)

With the participation of the

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Federal Railroad Administration
Federal Transit Administration

FHWA will issue a single Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision document pursuant to Pub. L. 112-141, 126 Stat. 405, Section 1319(b) unless FHWA determines statutory criteria or practicability considerations preclude issuance of the combined document pursuant to Section 1319.

8-27-13
Date of Approval

Jerry Wray, Director, Ohio Department of Transportation

8-30-2013
Date of Approval

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ABSTRACT

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), as joint lead agencies, are proposing the construction of a new arterial roadway (urban boulevard) within the City of Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio. The purpose of the new roadway is to improve connectivity, access, and mobility within the City of Cleveland. The project is also intended to support the City of Cleveland's planned economic development. The proposed urban boulevard would consist of a four- to five-lane typical section with turn lanes at intersections. It would begin in the west at the I-490-East 55th Street intersection, which is the eastern extent of the Interstate Highway System and the I-77/I-490 system interchange. The proposed boulevard would end at the East 105th Street-Chester Avenue intersection in the east.

The FHWA and ODOT have worked to avoid, minimize and mitigate the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. This process included extensive efforts to involve the public and stakeholders in the planning and design of the proposed project. The primary environmental impacts of the project are the proposed acquisition, relocation and demolition of residences, commercial businesses, and one church.

Unavoidable impacts to low-income and minority populations would also occur. Several measures will be put into place to mitigate these impacts.

The proposed project is estimated to require a $331.3 million investment. ODOT is evaluating several potential funding sources to pay for the project, including local, state and federal funds, as well as private funding through a public-private partnership.

This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) provides a complete picture of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project, from beginning to end. It describes why the transportation project is needed, the alternatives that were studied, the preferred alternative, the potential effects, the efforts to include the public and agencies in the decision-making process, as well as the outcomes of these efforts. The DEIS also identifies proposed mitigation for any unavoidable impacts.

This information is presented in a manner that is intended to facilitate the reading and understanding of this document's findings by all readers, including the public, environmental resource and regulatory agency representatives, and decision-makers.

For readers interested in the details of the studies and activities associated with the preparation of this DEIS, a series of technical reports has been published. The reports are available on the CD that accompanies this DEIS and on the project website at www.BuckeyeTraffic.org/OpportunityCorridor.

Comments on this DEIS should be sent to the individual listed below. Inquiries and requests for information should also be directed or submitted to the attention of the following individual:

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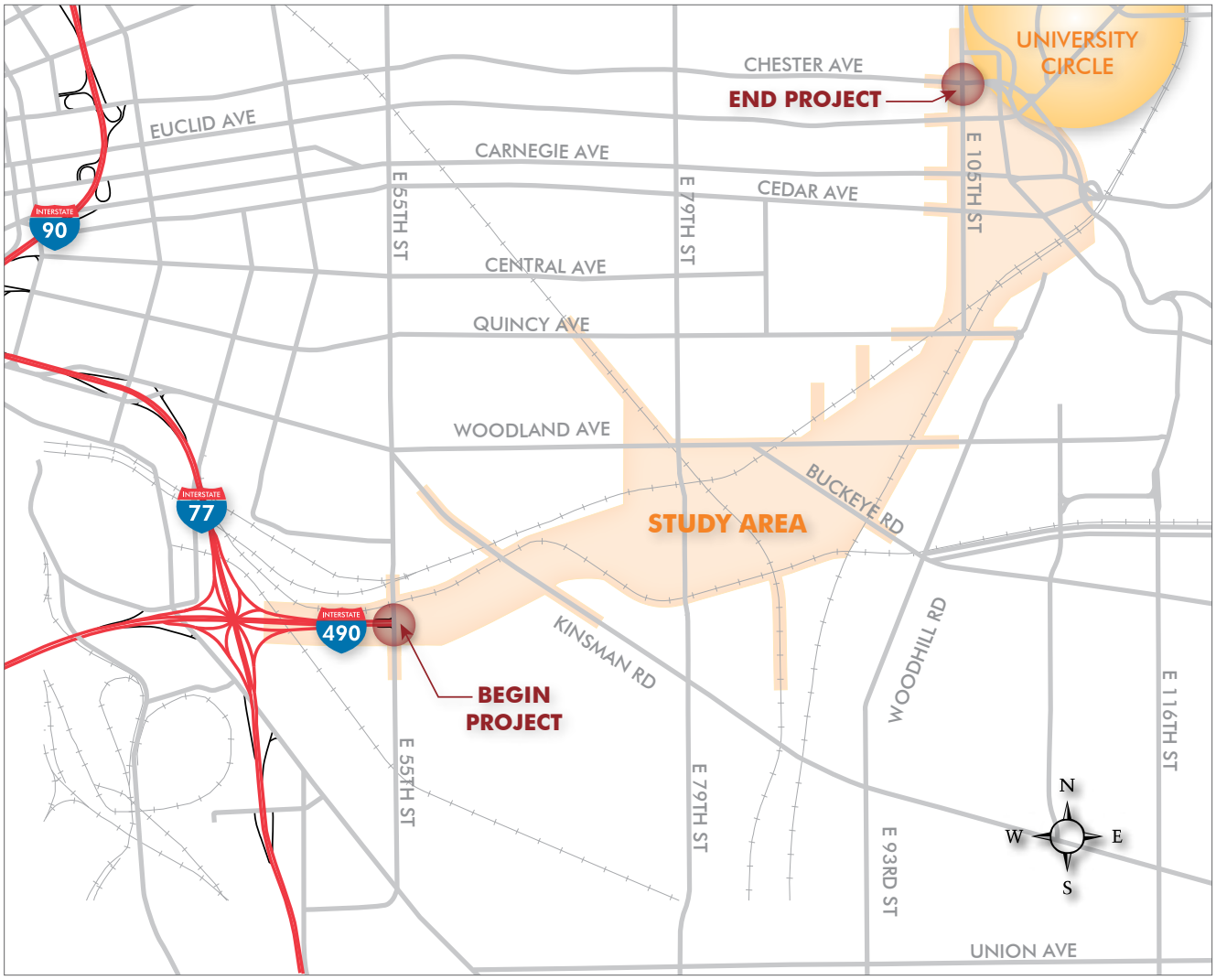
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project is located in the City of Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio. The proposed project involves building an urban boulevard with traffic lights at intersections from the I-490-East 55th Street intersection to the East 105th Street-Chester Avenue intersection. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) is managing the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). ODOT is working closely with the City of Cleveland and the Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP) as these groups develop their vision for future land use and economic development in southeast Cleveland, including the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor study area.

Figure ES-1: Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Project Location



Several other public and private activities are focused on growth and development of the study area, including the City of Cleveland's brownfields study, which is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The planning and design of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor is being coordinated with these activities, as needed.

PROJECT LOCATION AND STUDY AREA DESCRIPTION

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor study area stretches from I-490/I-77/East 55th Street in the west to East 105th Street/Chester Avenue in the east (see Figure ES-1, page ES-1). The study area is urbanized and does not have any major natural resources such as wetlands, streams or surface water bodies. Also, the study area does not include farmland or agricultural activity. It does, however, include a number of neighborhoods and human-made resources such as homes, businesses, churches, schools, parks, recreation centers, historic properties, current and former industrial and manufacturing sites, public transportation facilities, and other transportation features.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project is to improve the roadway network within a historically underserved, economically depressed area within the City of Cleveland.

The proposed project must address the following need elements:

- Improve system linkage;
- Improve mobility; and
- Support planned economic development.

The following goals have also been identified for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project:

- Improve public transportation connections; and
- Improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

ALTERNATIVES

The alternatives for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project were developed through the ODOT's Project Development Process, which uses environmental and engineering studies to find solutions for transportation problems.

As part of the alternatives development and evaluation process, ODOT coordinated extensively with those who live, work, own businesses, or have other special interest in the study area. This process, which is called context sensitive solutions (CSS) design, is intended to develop a project that fits within a community. Using CSS can help to keep and improve visual, historic, community and environmental resources while still meeting all of the project requirements.

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Steering Committee also provided input. This 21-member group is made up of neighborhood, business, political and transportation agency representatives, and leaders of community development corporations.

ODOT began studying alternatives for the Opportunity Corridor during the Cleveland Innerbelt study, which began in 2000. During this study, alternatives were developed to address the transportation needs associated with Cleveland's Innerbelt Bridge. The alternatives studied included improving existing roadways, improving transit, providing lanes for High Occupancy Vehicles (HOV), and other ways to manage traffic volumes using technology. Several of these alternatives were recommended for further study either by ODOT or others.

As part of the *Innerbelt Strategic Plan* (July 2004), concepts were also developed to shift some traffic from the Innerbelt Bridge to other roads. One specific concept was to provide a better transportation connection between I-490 and University Circle. Both freeway and boulevard connections were studied, but the freeway alternative was not recommended due to costs, estimated property impacts and public

opposition. Based on the recommendations of the Innerbelt study, ODOT decided that an urban boulevard – a new road with a wide median and traffic lights at intersections – should be further studied as part of separate project, which came to be known as the Opportunity Corridor project.

ODOT studied a range of alternatives for the Opportunity Corridor project. These included improving existing streets – such as East 55th Street and Woodland Avenue – as well new roadways both north and south of the Norfolk Southern (NS)/Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA) rail trench. The alternative that widened East 55th Street and Woodland Avenue was removed from further study because the transportation benefits it would provide were not enough to justify the relatively high impacts to community facilities, cemeteries and churches.

Generally speaking, new roadways north of the NS/GCRTA rail trench also were not studied further because they would not support the planned economic development in the Forgotten Triangle. Alternatives south of the NS/GCRTA rail trench were found to meet the project purpose and need and were studied further. The alternatives are described in more detail in the in the *Opportunity Corridor Draft Strategic Plan* (September 2006) and the *Opportunity Corridor Conceptual Alternatives Study* (October 2010).

The alternatives studied by ODOT were presented to the public through a series of large open-house public meetings and neighborhood meetings in September 2009 and October 2010. Based on the input received during those meetings and more detailed study, several alternatives were eliminated, leaving one remaining alternative. This alternative—which is called the preferred alternative—was presented to the public and project stakeholders at public meetings in July 2011. Based on the comments and input received at those meetings, ODOT decided to evaluate the preferred alternative in this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

In addition to the build alternatives, ODOT also studied a No-Build Alternative. The No-Build Alternative is what would happen within the study area if no project were built. It includes minor, regular short-term safety and maintenance efforts. It also includes other major projects that would affect transportation in the study area.

The No-Build Alternative does not meet the purpose and need for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project. The No-Build Alternative would keep existing connections between I-77 and University Circle, but it would not improve these connections. The No-Build Alternative would also not improve mobility or levels of service for traffic traveling to, from and within the area between I-77 and University Circle. This alternative also would not create the transportation infrastructure needed to support revival and redevelopment in and around the study area.

The No-Build Alternative is not recommended as a reasonable solution, but it was used as a way to compare the impacts, benefits and costs of the preferred alternative.

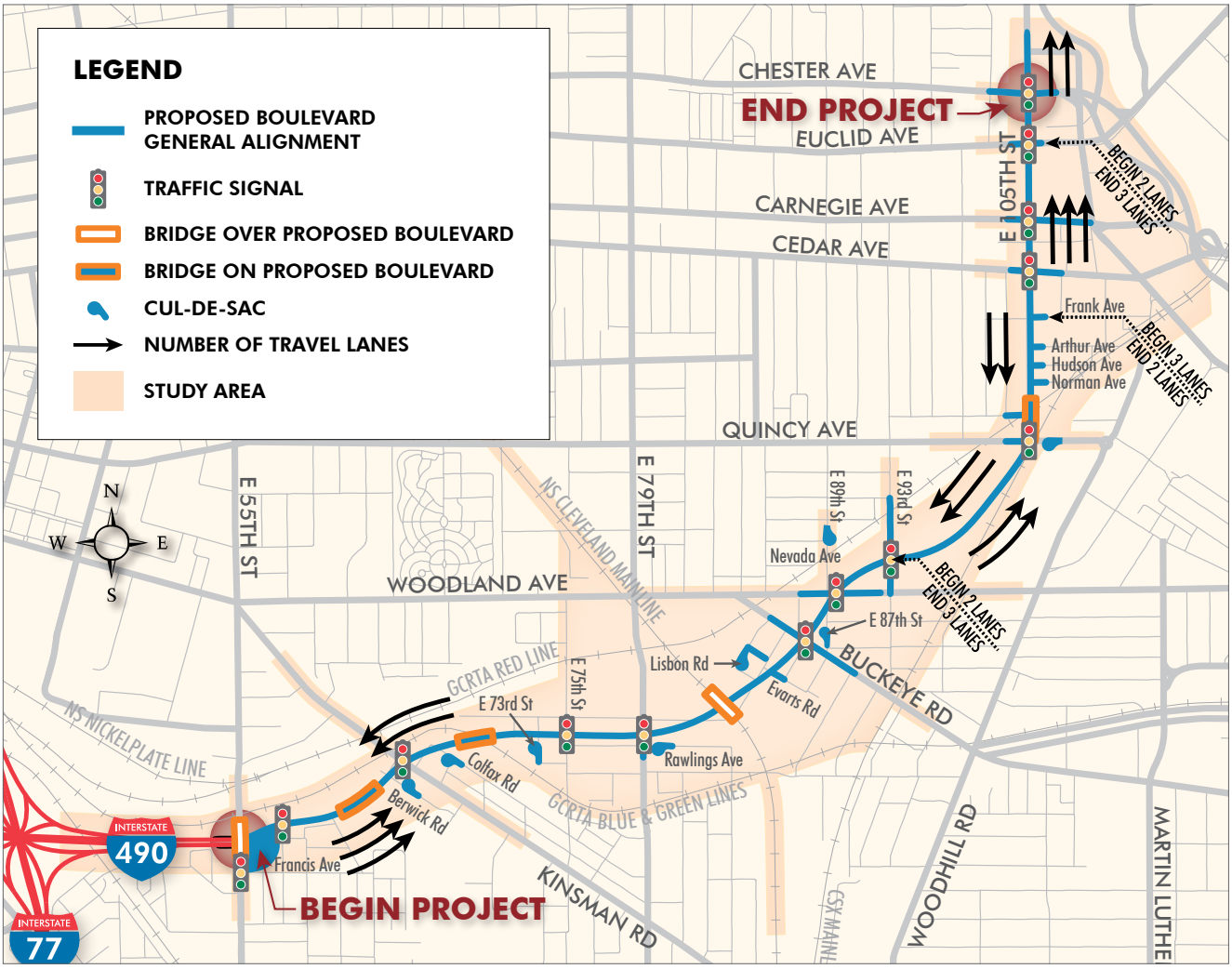
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative involves building an urban boulevard with traffic lights at intersections from the I-490-East 55th Street intersection to the East 105th Street-Chester Avenue intersection (Figure ES-2, page ES-4). The proposed boulevard will have two westbound through-lanes, but the number of eastbound through-lanes will vary.

The project includes three eastbound through-lanes between I-490 and East 93rd Street. In general, the roadway will have two through-lanes between East 93rd Street and Chester Avenue, but the roadway between Frank and Euclid avenues will include a third eastbound through-lane. Left- and right-turn lanes will also be added at many of the intersections.

The proposed boulevard generally will be built where no roads exist now except for the stretch from Quincy Avenue to Chester Avenue, which will be built on existing East 105th

Figure ES-2: Preferred Alternative



Street. The boulevard will include a low, grassy median between East 55th Street and Quincy Avenue. However, the grassy median and tree lawns will not be included on the bridges. The proposed boulevard will also include a walking/biking path on the south side of the roadway, and a sidewalk on the north side.

The preferred alternative will meet the purpose and need for the project. It will:

- **Improve "system linkage"** – connections among the roads, neighborhoods and businesses – with an east-west arterial street between I-77 and University Circle;
- **Improve mobility** – the movement of people and goods – to, from and within the area between I-77 and the University Circle; and
- **Create the infrastructure to support planned revival and redevelopment** in area in and around the "Forgotten Triangle," which is bordered by Kinsman Road, Woodland Avenue and Woodhill Road.

The preferred alternative will also accomplish the following objectives:

- Improve connectivity among transit facilities such as GCRTA stations;
- Support redevelopment plans that could increase patronage within the transit system;

- Providing multiple transportation mode options by including safe bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly facilities; and

- Improving connections to existing and planned multimodal facilities in and near the study area.

AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING IMPACTS

Feedback received from agencies, the public and other stakeholders led to design changes to reduce impacts, improve the look of the roadway and best meet the community's priorities and needs. For example, the path of the roadway has been shifted in several places between East 55th Street and Quincy Avenue to minimize the number of homes and businesses affected by the project. These changes minimized impacts in the St. Hyacinth area, as well as the planned expansion of two major employers (Orlando Baking Company and Miceli's Dairy Products). In some areas, such as the St. Hyacinth neighborhood, retaining walls have been added to minimize impacts on homes and businesses.

The design was also updated to avoid impacting community resources such as the Kenneth Johnson Recreational Center, churches and historic properties. For instance, the current design includes narrower lane widths on East 105th Street north of Park Lane, which is where the project reconnects to the existing streets. In this area, the lanes would be narrower than Cuyahoga County design standards to match the existing lane widths. This eliminates impacts to city-owned Wade Park and lessens impacts to the Wade Park Historic District. Another design change included keeping Quincy Avenue between East 105th Street and Woodhill Road open for emergency vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. This change was made at the request of the City of Cleveland and was designed to minimize impacts related to closing Quincy Avenue.

Another example of how the public shaped the project is the quadrant roadway at I-490/ East 55th Street. This feature was added based on the community's desire to keep full access to and from East 55th Street. It will also help make accessing the East 55th Street transit station safer and easier for pedestrians.

Some design features were added to the project to improve the look of the roadway. These items included mast arm traffic signal supports; combined street and pedestrian lighting; grass tree lawns (parkways); street trees; grassy roadway median with storm water treatment measures; retaining walls and bridge abutments with form-liner surfaces and colored surface sealer; and benches, trash receptacles, and bike racks.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Table ES-1, which begins on page ES-7, summarizes the potential benefits and impacts of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project preferred alternative. The No-Build Alternative, which is not recommended as a reasonable solution, is included in the table as a way to compare the impacts and benefits of the preferred alternative.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND COST ESTIMATE

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project likely will be constructed in phases. A preliminary phasing plan has been developed as part of this DEIS. It is based on current traffic conditions, maintenance of traffic during construction, constructability, and traffic flow in the finished section.

The preliminary phasing plan includes two sections (Figure ES-3, page ES-6), but it could be changed during final design or as funding sources become available:

- **Section 1:** Quincy Avenue to Chester Avenue

- **Section 2:** I-490-East 55th Street to Quincy Avenue

Figure ES-3: Construction Sections

If a phased approach is used, the completed portion of the corridor will be open as soon as possible so that some benefits would be realized before the entire corridor is fully built.

The total cost of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project is currently estimated at $331.3 million. The project cost estimate considers all currently known work required to build the project – the costs of final design; project administration and management; land acquisition; utility relocation; implementation of environmental commitments and mitigation measures; and construction activities. It also assumes the project is constructed in two phases – as outlined above – and considers the effects of inflation. The current cost estimate assumes construction of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project will be finished in 2018.

ODOT is evaluating several potential funding sources for the project, including local, state and federal funds, as well as private funding through a public-private partnership.

Table ES-1: Environmental Resources, Impacts and Mitigation Summary

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE	NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE	PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE	ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS and MITIGATION
Streams or Surface Water Bodies *(page 4-35)*	No impacts.	No impacts.	None.
Aquatic Habitat *(page 4-35)*	No impacts.	No impacts.	None.
Water Quality *(pages 4-35 and 4-36)*	No impacts.	Improved water quality through: • Construction of a separate storm sewer system. • Construction of a depressed grassy median to slow down runoff and naturally filter it. • Construction of a detention basin in the Kingsbury Run Ravine to store stormwater and slowly release it.	• An Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit will be obtained before construction activities occur. Coordination with OEPA and the Northeast Ohio Sewer District (NEORSD) will continue during final design. • A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be prepared by the contractor. • Best Management Practices (BMPs) from ODOT's *Construction and Material Specifications* will be used during and after construction to control erosion and sediment.
Wetlands *(page 4-35)*	No impacts.	No impacts.	None.
Threatened and Endangered Species or Habitat *(page 4-35)*	No impacts.	No impacts.	None.
Floodplains *(page 4-35)*	No impacts.	No impacts.	None.
Farmland *(page 4-35)*	No impacts.	No impacts.	None.
Land Use *(page 4-5 and 4-6)*	No impacts.	Consistent with planned development and local land use plans.	None.
Property* *(page 4-6)*	No impacts.	• 46.9 acres permanent right of way. • 39.0 acres temporary easement. • Approximately 16% of the land needed is owned by the City of Cleveland Land Bank Program.	None.
Residential Relocations* *(pages 4-6 – 4-19)*	No impacts.	64 buildings/76 units	None.

** The purchase of private property and cost of moving residents, businesses and churches to build the project would be regulated by state and federal laws, including the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act (Uniform Act). These laws provide for the fair and equal treatment of all persons affected by the project.*

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE	NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE	PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE	ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS and MITIGATION
Commercial Business Relocations* *(pages 4-6 – 4-19)*	No impacts.	25 buildings/ 16 occupants	None.
Church Relocations (Buildings)* *(pages 4-6 – 4-19)*	No impacts.	1 building	None.
Bicycles and Pedestrians *(pages 4-19 – 4-22)*	No impacts.	Improved overall bicycle and pedestrian connections, access and safety by building features for these users.	None.
Roadway Connections *(pages 4-22 and 4-23)*	No impacts.	Several streets would be cul-de-sac'd and/or closed. In each of the areas, the project would provide access to homes and businesses. Additionally, as requested by the City of Cleveland, access for bicycles, pedestrians and emergency service providers would remain on Quincy Avenue. These features would minimize impacts as much as possible; as a result, overall impacts would be minor.	None.
Public Transportation *(page 4-23)*	No impacts.	The project would benefit public transportation through improved vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian connections to existing facilities.	None.
Community or Public Services *(page 4-23)*	No impacts.	Improved access for emergency service providers.	None.
Traffic Noise *(pages 4-23 – 4-25)*	No impacts.	The project is predicted to have traffic noise impacts in 24 general locations.	Noise walls are recommended in three areas to mitigate increased traffic noise. The final decision about whether to build the noise walls will not be made until the project is in its final design stage. ODOT will gather input from residents and property owners who would be affected by the noise walls. ODOT will decide whether to build the noise walls based on the desires of the affected people. If noise walls are desired, the people who are affected will help decide how the walls will look on their side of the wall.
Air Quality *(pages 4-25 and 4-26)*	No impacts.	• The project is not a project of air quality concern. Additionally, no predicted violations of National Ambient Air Quality Standards would occur as a result of the project. • The project is categorized as "Low potential for Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSAT) effects."	None.

** The purchase of private property and cost of moving residents, businesses and churches to build the project would be regulated by state and federal laws, including the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act (Uniform Act). These laws provide for the fair and equal treatment of all persons affected by the project.*

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE	NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE	PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE	ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS and MITIGATION
Visual Resources *(pages 4-26 and 4-27)*	No impacts.	Several design features coordinated with the community during the CSS design process to improve the look of the study area.	Public involvement will continue during final design to determine locations and details of community-focused design features. The public will also give input on details to improve the look of the study area such as colored concrete and form liners.
Environmental Justice *(pages 4-27 – 4-31)*	No impacts.	Would result in disproportionately high and adverse impacts to low-income and minority populations.	The following measures are proposed to mitigate the impacts and provide added benefits to the local community: • ODOT will build two pedestrian/bike bridges: one at East 59th Street and one at East 89th Street. • ODOT will implement a voluntary residential relocation program to allow some residents whose homes are not directly impacted by the project to be eligible for relocation assistance. • ODOT will contribute $500,000 toward the planned expansion of the Kenneth L. Johnson (Woodland) Recreational Center. • For required relocations, ODOT will work to provide replacement housing that has similar access to public transit, as long as those options are currently available in the housing market. ODOT will also make all reasonable efforts to relocate residents within the same neighborhood, if that is what they desire. ODOT will present other possible mitigation and enhancement measures during the DEIS review period and at the public hearing (pages 4-29 and 4-30). Based on the comments received, additional measures may be incorporated into the project.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE	NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE	PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE	ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS and MITIGATION
Parks and Recreational Resources (Section 4(f) and Section 6(f)) *(pages 4-31 and 4-32)*	No impacts.	The Kenneth L. Johnson (Woodland) Recreation Center, located at 9206 Woodland Avenue, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Temporary easement (approximately 0.19 acres) will be needed from the planned expansion area of the rec center. The land would be needed for about six months.	During final design, the project sponsor will coordinate with the National Park Service (NPS) through ODOT and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) for any anticipated Section 6(f) impacts to the rec center. This coordination will occur approximately one to two years before plans are finalized. To minimize impacts to the rec center, the following items will be included in the final design plans: • The plans will require the contractor to protect rec center areas and users with warnings signs, gates, barricades or fences during construction; • Access to the rec center will be maintained at all times. The contractor will be required to closely coordinate the construction schedule with the City of Cleveland. Two weeks before the construction starts, the contractor will notify the city, in writing, of the occupation dates; • Any disturbed areas will be put back to a condition at least as good as or better than what was there before construction started; • No staging/storage of construction equipment will be on the rec center property; and • If unexpected work on the rec center property is needed, advance notice will be given to the City of Cleveland and ODOT to decide if additional coordination is needed.
Cultural Resources (Section 106 and Section 4(f)) *(pages 4-32 – 4-35)*	No impacts.	• Temporary right of way (approximately 0.05 acres) required from the existing Kenneth L. Johnson (Woodland) Recreational Center (9206 Woodland Ave). • Temporary and permanent right of way (approximately 0.12 acres and 0.01 acres, respectively) required from the Wade Park Historic District and two contributing elements: the 4th Church of Christian Scientists (10515 Chester Avenue) and Park Lane Villa (10510 Park Lane). • A Section 106 determination of "no adverse effect" is appropriate for the project. A *de minimis* Section 4(f) finding applies to impacts to historic resources.	None.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE	NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE	PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE	ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS and MITIGATION
Industrial Properties (Regulated Materials) *(pages 4-36 – 4-38)*	No impacts.	• 26 properties require Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) during final design. • 16 properties currently require Phase II ESAs during final design. Additional Phase II ESAs may be required based on the results of the Phase I ESAs.	During final design, the project sponsor will complete the remaining Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) for the properties affected by the proposed project. Any properties recommended for further study will also be evaluated through Phase II ESAs. The results of those studies, including any requirements for material handling and disposal and worker protection, will be included in the design plans for the project.
Construction Impacts *(pages 4-37 and 4-39)*	No impacts.	Potential temporary construction effects could include: • Temporary use of land to build the new boulevard and other features; • Temporary increase in noise from construction equipment and activities; • Temporary decrease in local air quality due to increased emissions from construction equipment and dust; • Temporary travel delays and detours affecting roadway users, as well as community and emergency services; and • Temporary interruption of existing utility services.	• Temporary noise impacts from construction activities will be minimized through the use of pre-approved haul routes to bring materials to/ from the project. The contractor must also comply with City of Cleveland noise ordinances and other local laws governing construction. • State and local regulations regarding dust control will be followed to minimize air quality impacts during construction. Emissions from construction activities will be minimized through dust control measures outlined in ODOT's *Construction and Material Specifications*. • As part of final design, a maintenance of traffic plan will prepared to provide access to residences, businesses, public facilities, community services, and local roads during construction. The plan will include coordination with local emergency service providers, as well as news media to keep the general public informed of planned construction activities. • Utility relocations will be coordinated to avoid and/or minimize inconvenience to customers.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE	NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE	PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE	ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS and MITIGATION
Indirect and Cumulative Effects *(pages 4-41 – 4-43)*	No impacts.	• The project could affect the timing and location of planned economic development. However, the effects of any future land use change would also largely be determined by local plans and regulations. • Future land use change could also impact more residents and businesses, although they would be able to choose if they want to move out of the area. If this happens, replacement housing and business sites should be available in nearby neighborhoods. • The project could result in indirect effects to historic resources. These impacts will be avoided or minimized through existing local, state, and federal regulations and requirements. • The project would not result in indirect or cumulative effects to natural resources. • The project may provide increased economic activity and job opportunities. • The project would also improve regional water quality.	None.

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

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APPENDICES

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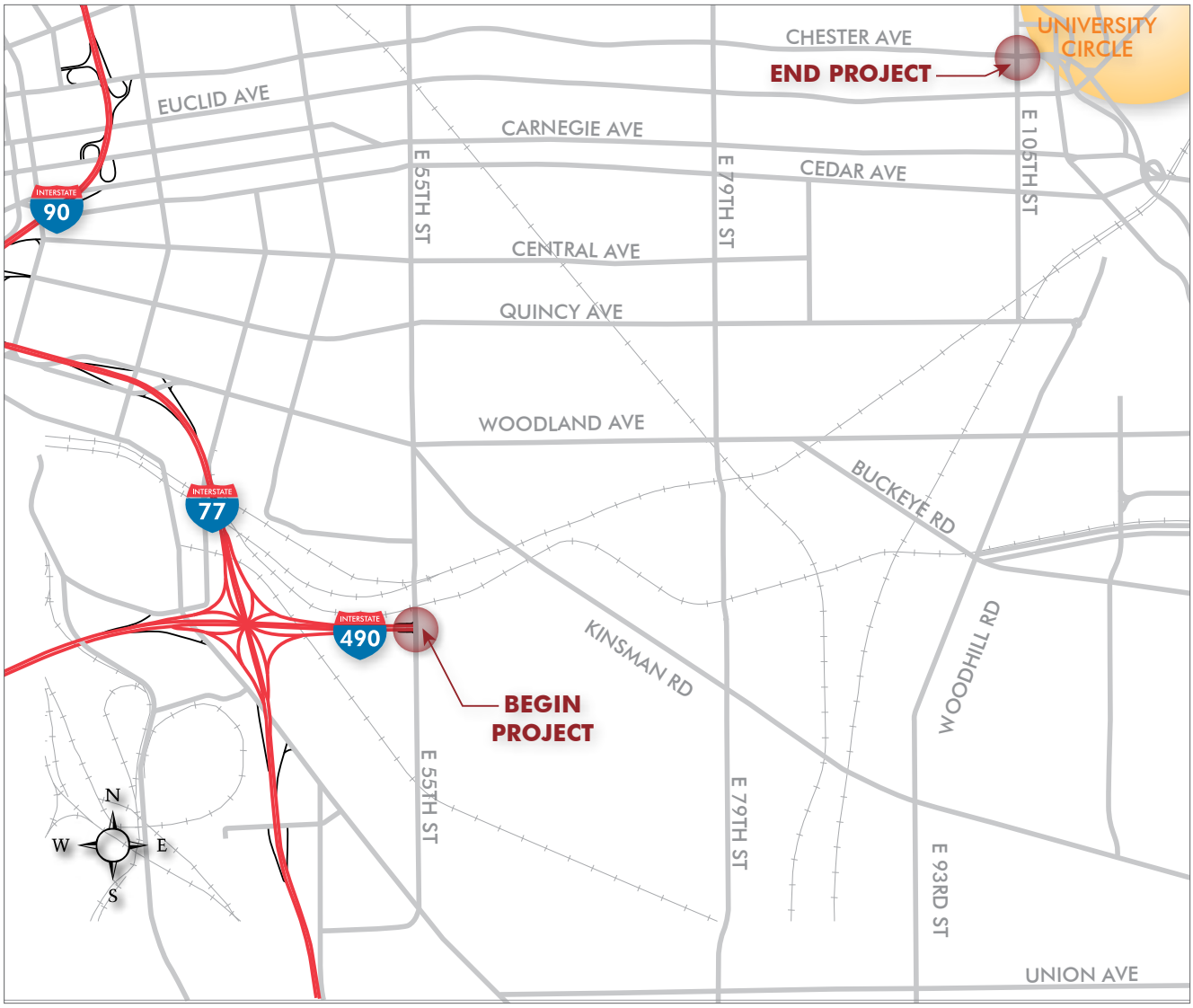
Chapter 1 || INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THE CLEVELAND OPPORTUNITY CORRIDOR PROJECT?

The project is located in the City of Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio. Figure 1-1 shows the general project location. The proposed project involves building an urban boulevard with traffic lights at intersections from the I-490-East 55th Street intersection to the East 105th Street-Chester Avenue intersection. The proposed boulevard between the I-490-East 55th Street intersection and Quincy Avenue generally will be built where no roads exist today, but the stretch from Quincy Avenue to Chester Avenue will be built on existing East 105th Street.

Figure 1-1: Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Project Location



The project includes three eastbound through-lanes between I-490 and East 93rd Street. In general, the roadway will have two through-lanes between East 93rd Street and Chester Avenue, but the roadway between Frank Avenue and Euclid Avenue will include a third eastbound through-lane. Left- and right-turn lanes will also be added at many of the intersections (Figure 1-2).

The boulevard will include a low, grassy median between East 55th Street and Quincy Avenue. However, the grassy median and tree lawns will not be included on the bridges. The proposed boulevard will also include a walking/biking path on the south side of the roadway, and a sidewalk on the north side. See Figure 1-3 on pages 1-3 and 1-4 for examples of what the proposed boulevard will look like.

WHO IS DEVELOPING THE PROJECT?

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) is managing the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). ODOT is working closely with the City of Cleveland and the Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP) as these groups develop their vision for future land use and economic development in southeast Cleveland, including the Opportunity Corridor study area. Several other public and private activities are focused on growth and development of the study area, including the City of Cleveland's brownfields study, which is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The planning and design of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor is being coordinated with these activities, as needed.

Figure 1-2: Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Proposed General Alignment

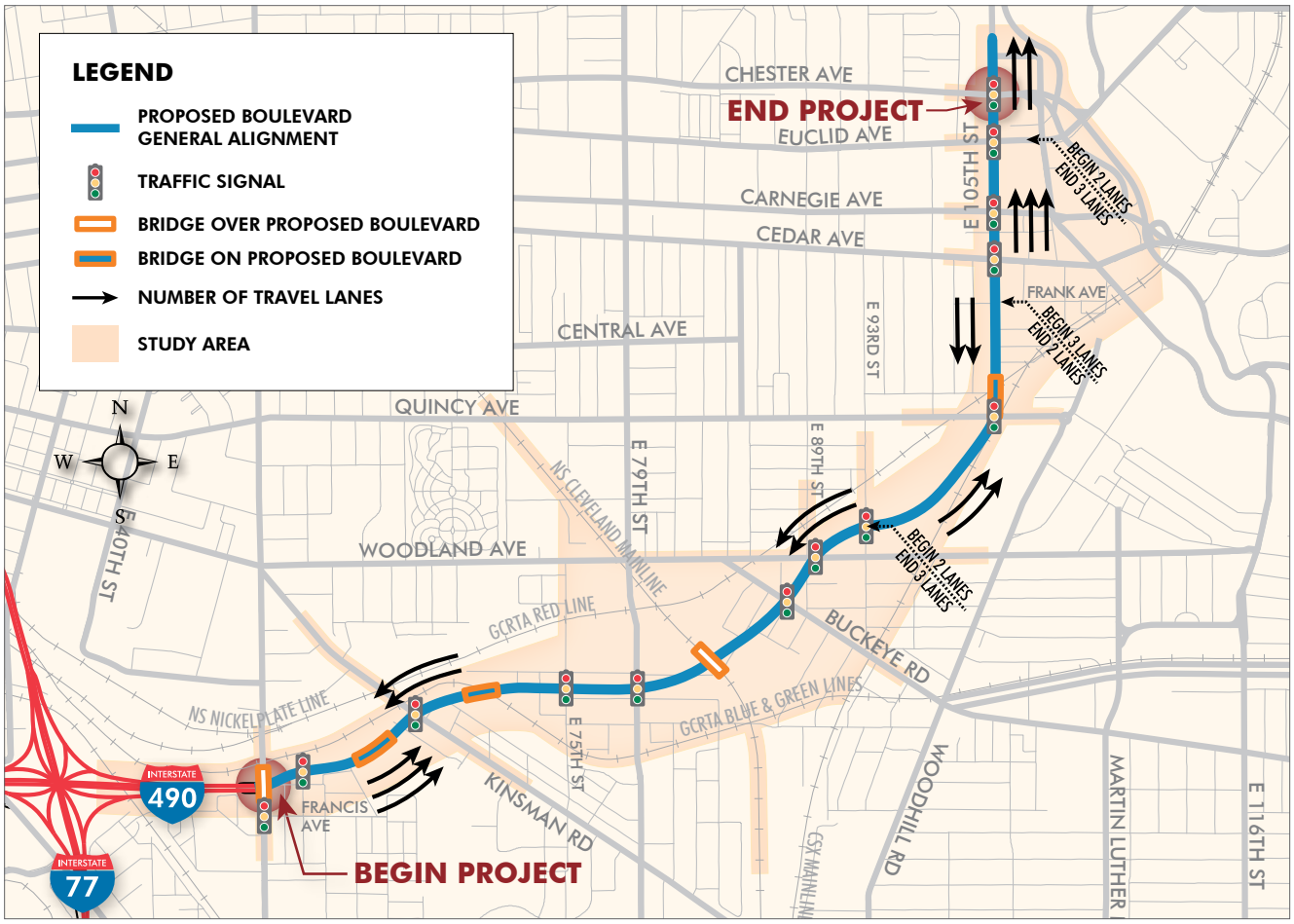
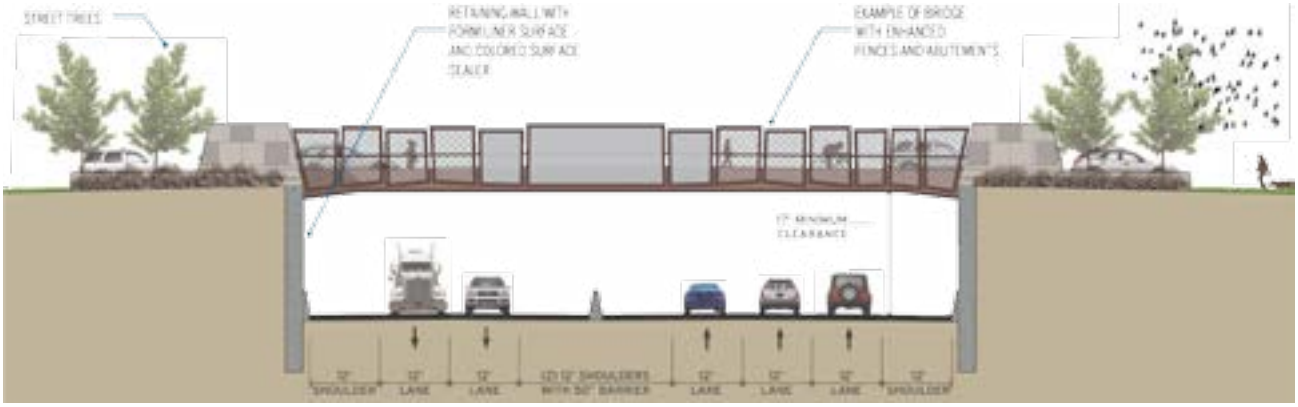


Figure 1-3: Proposed Boulevard Section Views

▼ East 55th Street Bridge (Looking East)



▼ Typical Boulevard at Side Street Intersection

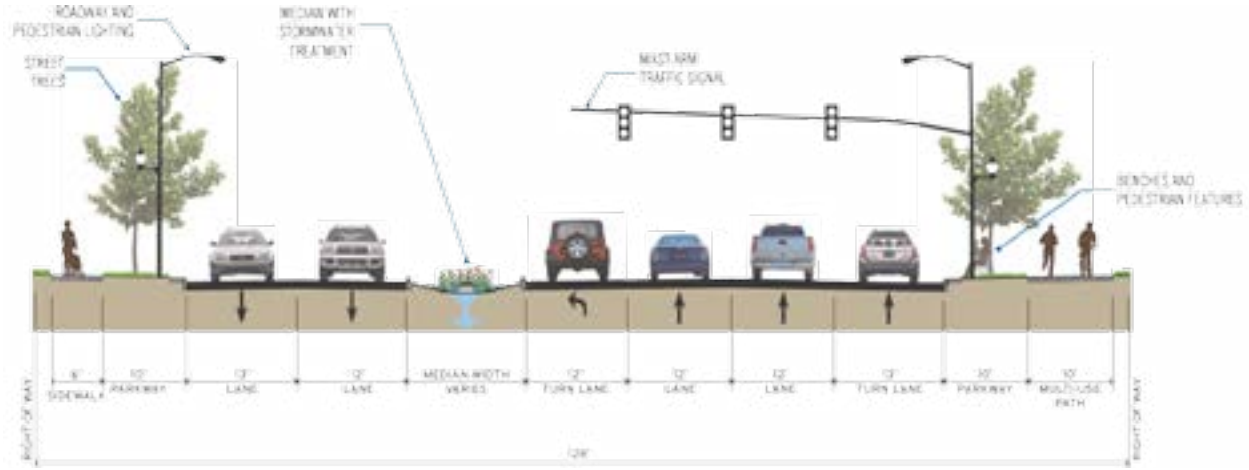
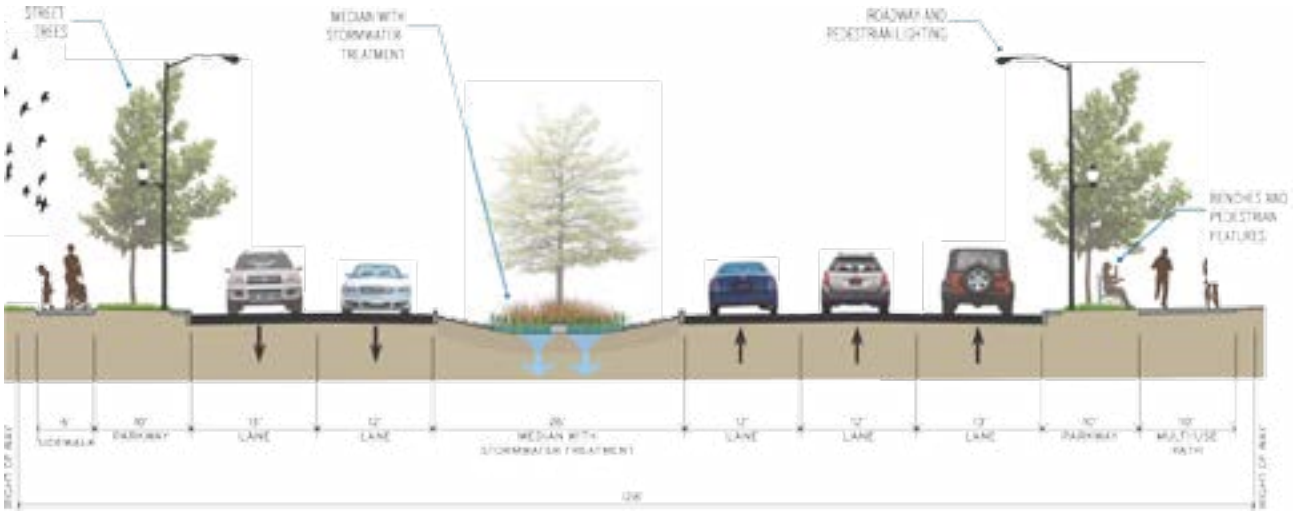


Figure 1-3: Proposed Boulevard Section Views

▼ Typical Boulevard (Looking East)



▼ East 105th Street (Looking North)

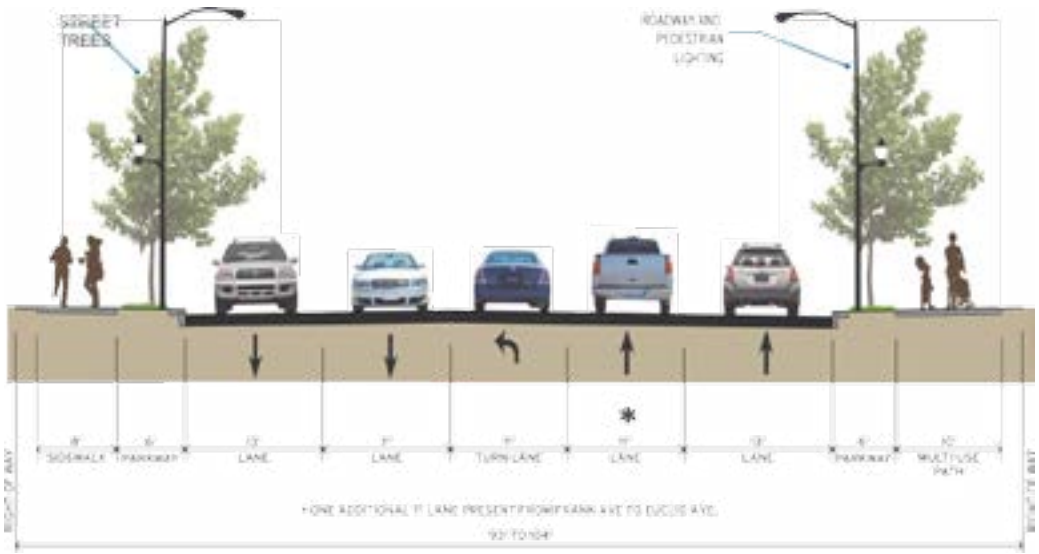


Figure 1-4: Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Project Steering Committee Members

- Buckeye Area Development Corp.
- Buckeye Community
- Burten Bell Carr Development Corp.
- Case Western Reserve University
- City of Cleveland
- City of Cleveland Council (Wards 5, and 12)
- Cleveland Clinic
- Cuyahoga County
- Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works
- Early Stage Partners, LP
- Fairfax Community
- Fairfax Renaissance Development Corp.
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP)
- Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA)
- Kinsman Community
- Maingate Business Development Corp.
- New Era Builders
- Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating (NOACA)
- North Shore Federation of Labor
- Ohio Department of Development
- Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
- Orlando Baking Company
- Slavic Village Development Corp.
- Slavic Village/St. Hyacinth Community
- State of Ohio
- The Cleveland Foundation
- The George Fund Foundation
- The Plain Dealer
- University Circle Community
- University Circle, Inc.
- University Hospitals

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Steering Committee (Figure 1-4) also provides input on the project. This 21-member group is made up of neighborhood, business, political and transportation agency representatives, and leaders of community development corporations.

The committee members represent neighborhood and business interests in the project; encourage public input; and help build support for the project.

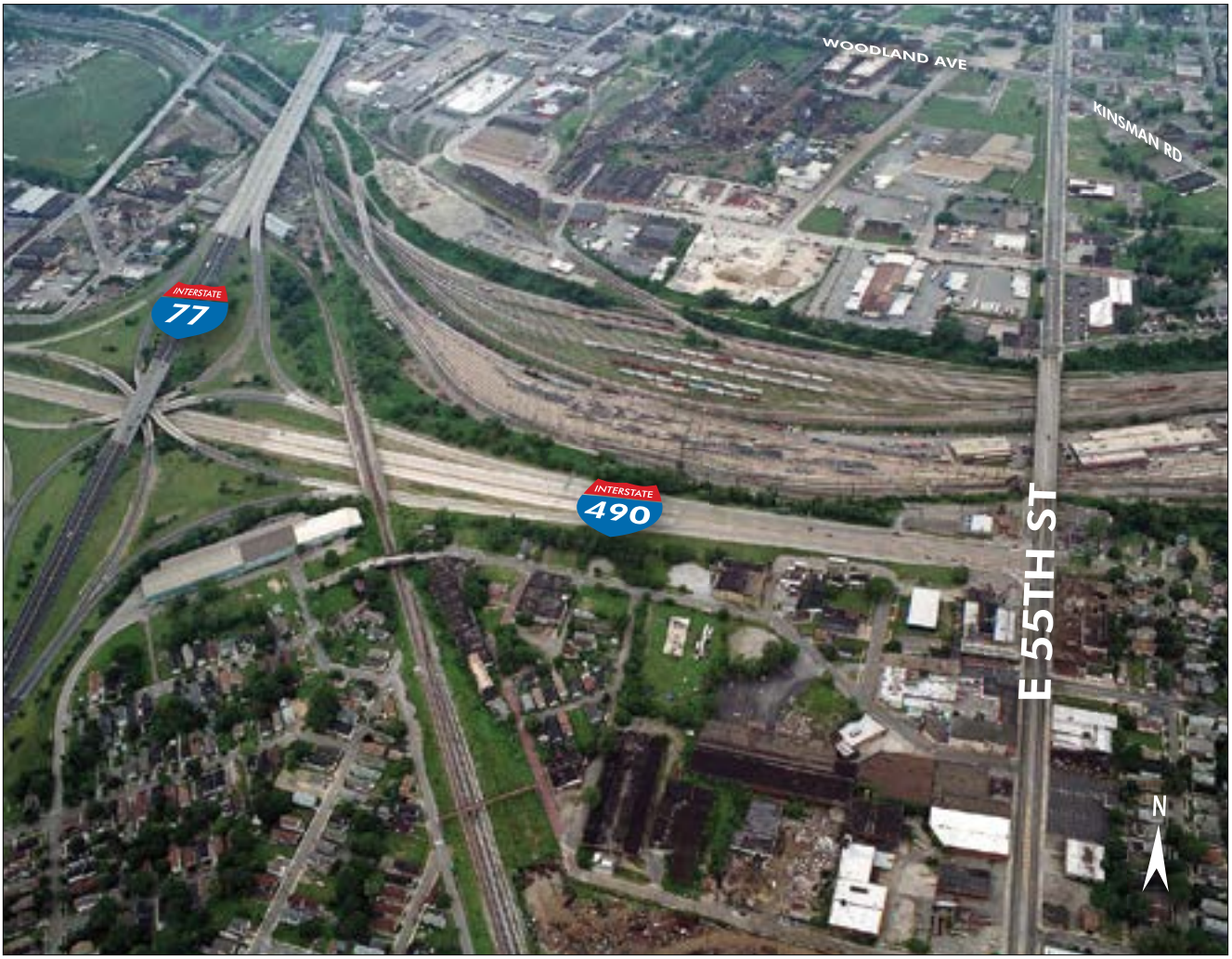
Input given by other stakeholders, residents and business-owners at large public meetings, smaller neighborhood meetings and individual business meetings has also been important during development of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project.

WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF THE PROJECT?

During the past 50 years, many ideas for extending I-490 to the east (Figure 1-5, page 1-6) have been proposed by Cuyahoga County, the City of Cleveland and private interests. Projects such as the Clark Freeway in the 1950s and '60s, and the Bedford Freeway in the 1970s, as well as some local arterial proposals, studied potential new east-west connections in the area.

In 2000, ODOT began a study of Cleveland's Innerbelt Freeway. During this study, concepts were developed to shift some traffic from the Innerbelt Bridge to other roads to reduce traffic on the future Innerbelt river crossing.

In early 2001, east-side workers who lived west and south of downtown told the Innerbelt study team that they wanted a connection from I-490 to their workplaces without having to travel the indirect route on the Innerbelt Freeway and through downtown. The workers' comments, combined with concerns about local access, convinced ODOT to begin the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor study – then called the University Circle Access Boulevard – to evaluate the pros and cons of this connection.



▲ *Figure 1-5: Many studies during the past 50 years have looked at ways to connect I-490 to points east.*

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor study formally began in 2004. Since then, a number of environmental and engineering studies have documented the conditions in the project area. The study team studied several alternative solutions for the project to determine their potential benefits and costs. Throughout the process, ODOT has engaged a wide array of public and private stakeholders to obtain input about the project.

This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) summarizes the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor study findings and includes a final recommendation – which is called the preferred alternative – for connecting I-490 to University Circle.

WHAT IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT?

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) requires federal agencies to publish an EIS when they are planning a project that will significantly affect the environment. The EIS provides a complete picture of a project, from beginning to the end. It describes why the transportation project is needed, the alternatives that were studied, potential effects, and includes public and agency comments. Public review of the EIS document allows environmental effects to play an important role – alongside other considerations such as feasibility and cost – in decisions made about a project.

Though many of the required efforts can overlap in time, an EIS document can take several years to develop. The process used to develop the Opportunity Corridor EIS is outlined below and shown in Figure 1-6:

- **Early Planning** – ODOT worked with project stakeholders to gather study area information; understand needs; establish goals and objectives; and evaluate preliminary alternatives. These activities occurred from the fall of 2004 through 2006.

- **Alternatives Development and Environmental Studies** – ODOT evaluated a number of alternative solutions. This included preliminary engineering design; detailed technical studies; and extensive public involvement to understand the potential benefits and costs of each alternative. The findings and conclusions of these activities were used to select a preferred alternative for the project. The alternatives development and environmental studies for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project occurred from the Spring of 2009 through early 2013.

- **Notice of Intent (NOI)** – During the alternatives development and evaluation process, ODOT published the NOI, which announced the decision to prepare an EIS for the project. The NOI was published in the *Federal Register,* which is the daily official journal of the U.S. federal government, on Sept. 1, 2010.

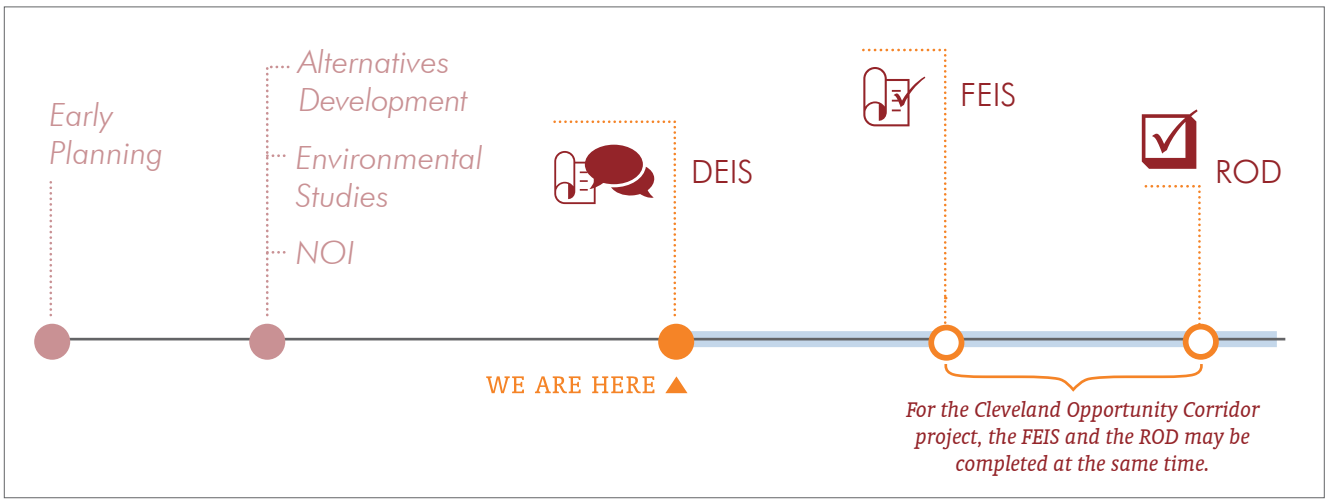
- **DEIS** – The DEIS summarizes the project activities completed to date. It explains why the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project is needed, the alternatives studied for the project and their corresponding impacts. The DEIS will be available for public review and comment for at least 45 days. During this review period, a public hearing will be held to allow people to learn more about the project and submit comments.

- **Final EIS (FEIS)** – The FEIS will include updates to the document that address comments collected during the DEIS review. It will also describe changes to the project since the DEIS was published.

- **Record of Decision (ROD)** – The ROD will be the formal approval of the EIS and the preferred alternative, which will allow the project to move toward final design and construction. For the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project, the FEIS and the ROD may be completed at the same time.

Engineers, planners and other experts have studied the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor for several years, producing hundreds of pages of text and exhibits that document their findings. This DEIS summarizes those reports and information, and it is written for readers who do not have any special knowledge about the project. The text is simple, with helpful

Figure 1-6: The EIS Process



graphics and charts. This approach – rather than writing a large, complex DEIS – helps those who live in, work in or travel through the area to easily understand the project and its effects.

Readers who want more information can refer to the project's technical reports, which are included on the CD that accompanies this document, and which cover in much greater detail all of the topics in the DEIS. The technical reports and other relevant information can also be found on the Opportunity Corridor project website (www.buckeyetraffic.org/opportunitycorridor).

WHAT'S NEXT?

Publication of this DEIS is a major milestone for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project. Agencies and the public have the opportunity to review the DEIS and other project information and provide their comments to ODOT.

A public hearing is scheduled during this review period to allow people to talk with the planners, engineers and officials who have been directly involved with the project. People can provide their comments publicly at the hearing or in a written statement. The comment period for the DEIS must last for a minimum of 45 days and will end no sooner than 30 days after the public hearing.

After comment period, ODOT will review all of the input it received. If necessary, ODOT will make changes to the project in response to comments and concerns. The project team will summarize all of the DEIS comments and any resulting changes to the preferred alternative in the FEIS. FHWA will then publish a ROD that represents formal federal approval of the EIS and preferred alternative and allows ODOT to begin design, land acquisition and construction as funding becomes available. For the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project, the FEIS and the ROD may be completed at the same time.

HOW CAN I COMMENT ON THE DEIS?

There are several ways to comment on the DEIS:

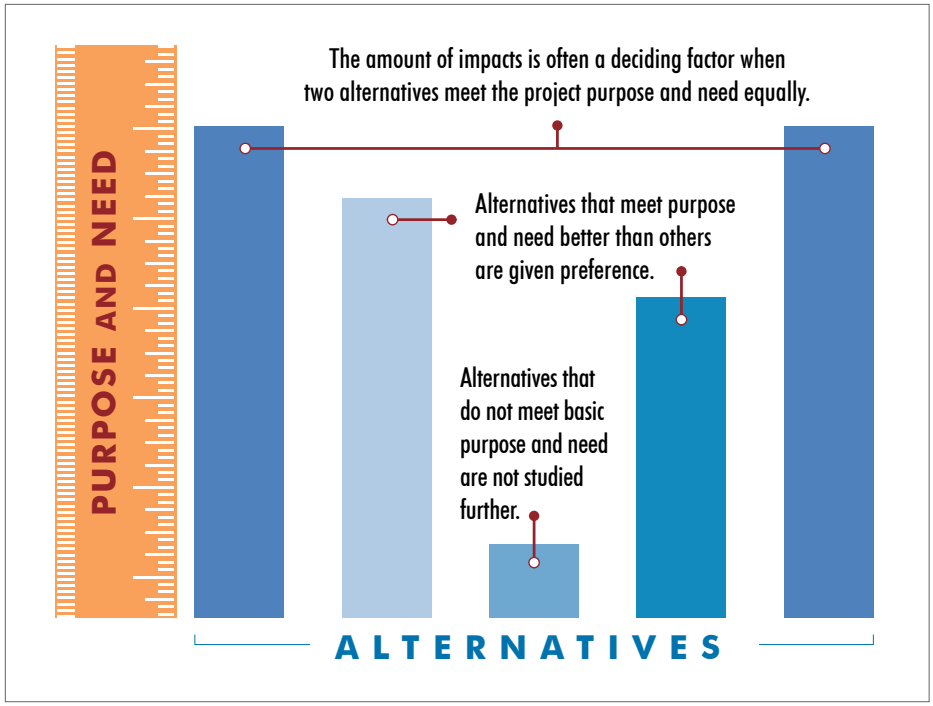
- Speak in person at the public hearing where a court reporter will record your comments.
- Fill out a comment form provided at the public hearing.
- Download a comment form at: www.buckeyetraffic.org/opportunitycorridor
- Send comments by email to: Amanda.Lee@dot.state.oh.us
- Send written comments by mail to:
  ODOT District 12
  Attn: Amanda Lee
  5500 Transportation Blvd.
  Garfield Heights, OH 44125

Chapter 2 | PURPOSE *and* NEED

WHAT ARE PURPOSE AND NEED?

The purpose and need for a project define the transportation problems that the project must solve. The purpose and need also act as "measuring sticks" for the project alternatives, helping determine to what extent each alternative meets each project need (Figure 2-1). Alternatives that do not meet the basic needs of a project are not studied further. Assuming all other concerns are equal, if one alternative meets the project purpose and need better than another, then that alternative is favored as the project progresses. And as alternatives are developed, the purpose and need can help determine if an impact is necessary.

Figure 2-1: Measuring Alternatives Using Purpose and Need



The purpose and need also help decide where a project will begin and end by defining the "who, what, where, when and why" of the transportation needs. This allows an agency to create alternatives that satisfy the project's needs completely – no more, no less. The beginning and end points of the project are also called "logical termini." Logical termini for roadway projects are usually interchanges or intersections where travel demand changes.

The purpose and need are updated throughout the planning and engineering stages as the project team learns more. The purpose and need are not final until they are approved in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

The purpose and need for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project are documented in the project's *Purpose and Need Statement*[1] (May 2011), which can be found on the CD included with this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Since 2011, the purpose and need have been updated with new population data from the 2010 U.S. census. These changes are included in the following sections.

[1] *This document is incorporated by reference into this DEIS.*

Figure 2-2: Street Grid in Study Area

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE CLEVELAND OPPORTUNITY CORRIDOR PROJECT?

The purpose of the project is to improve the roadway network within a historically underserved, economically depressed area in the City of Cleveland.

WHAT BASIC TRANSPORTATION NEEDS MUST THE PROJECT MEET?

The proposed project must:

1. **Improve system linkage.**
2. **Improve mobility.**
3. **Support planned economic development.**

What is "system linkage?"

System linkage refers to the connections among the roads, neighborhoods and businesses in an area. Today, only a few roads connect the southern and western portions of Cleveland's metro area to University Circle. Chester Avenue (US 322), Euclid Avenue (US 20) and Carnegie Avenue are the only direct connections between these areas. As a result, people traveling north on I-71 and I-77 must merge onto the Innerbelt Freeway (I-90) and travel through the central business district before reaching University Circle.

Recent changes on two of these primary routes have reduced the capacity of the roads between the Interstates and University Circle. Carnegie Avenue once had six lanes that could be switched to provide four or five lanes in the rush hour direction and one or two lanes in the opposite direction, but the avenue was restriped in 2005 to have two fixed lanes in each direction and a center lane for left turns. This eliminated up to three lanes to and from University Circle. Two bus-only lanes were built on Euclid Avenue in 2008, reducing the lanes from four to two.

In addition, the street grid (Figure 2-2, page 2-2) is missing an east-west connection between Woodland and Union avenues, a distance of about two miles. As a result, north-south and diagonal roadways are not directly linked, and drivers must twist and turn their ways through the local streets to reach University Circle, creating a traffic bottleneck at the I-490-East 55th Street and East 55th Street-Woodland Avenue-Kinsman Road intersections. Drivers' other option to reach University Circle is to travel on I-90 or I-490, merge onto Cleveland's Innerbelt Freeway and travel through the central business district.

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project must provide improved access between I-77 and University Circle.

What is "mobility?"

Mobility is the easy movement of people and goods through an area. It is difficult for trucks to negotiate the roads between I-77 and University Circle. Rail lines used to move most of the goods in this area, so the streets were built mostly for cars. Today, the remaining industries are served mostly by trucks that have to use streets that were not built for them. Also, traffic to and from the houses, apartments, churches and stores in the area does not mix well with the heavy, industrial trucks.

The closest Interstate for travelers in the study area is I-490, and most, if not all, traffic traveling in this area must pass through the I-490-East 55th Street intersection before spreading out to other roads or highways. As a result, 2005 and 2010 traffic counts show that this intersection operates at Level of Service F (Figure 2-3), meaning the traffic flow has broken down. Roadways with this poor level of service have more users than they can handle.

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project must provide improved mobility and better levels of service for traffic traveling to, from and within the area between I-77 and University Circle.

Figure 2-3: Levels of Service (LOS)

LOS A
Most vehicles arrive at the green light and travel through without stopping.

LOS B
Vehicles still move through the intersection very well, but more have to stop at the red light.

LOS C
A substantial number of vehicles have to stop at the red light, but many still pass through without stopping.

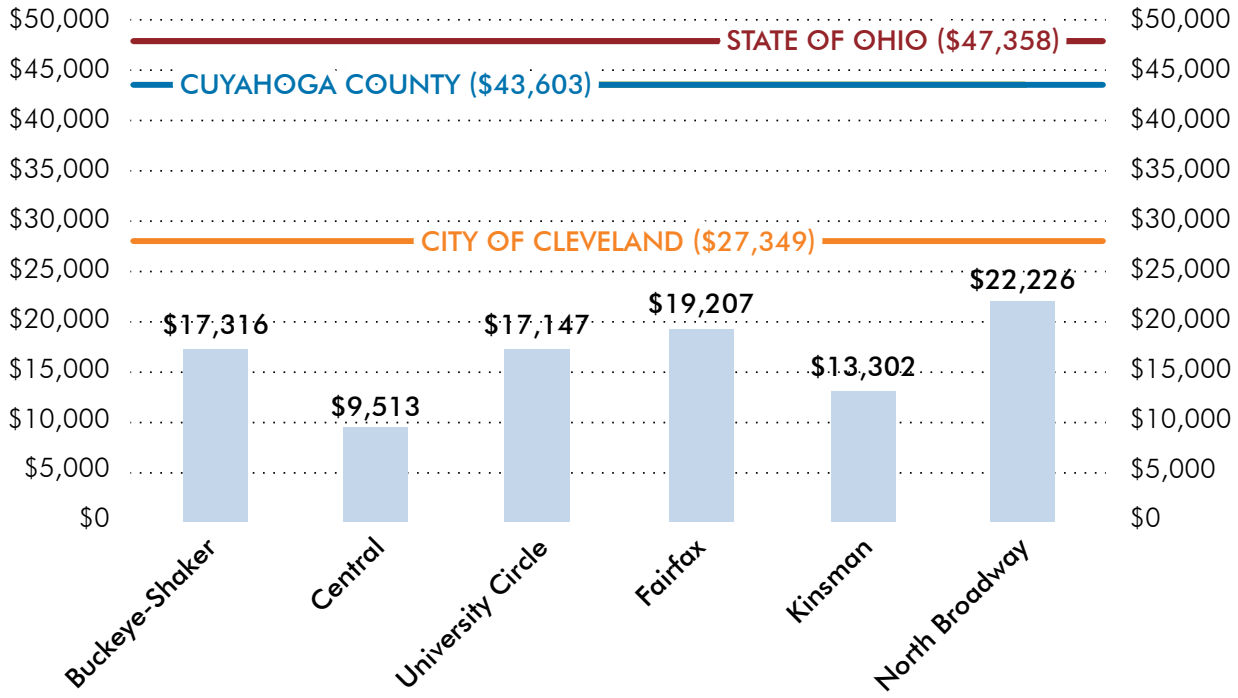
(Target LOS for Cleveland Opportunity Corridor)

LOS D
Many vehicles have to stop at the red light, and traffic starts stacking at the intersection. There are times where the stopped vehicles do not make it through the green light.

LOS E
Traffic volumes are higher than the intersection can handle with lines of stopped vehicles. A high number of stopped vehicles do not make it through the green light.

LOS F
Traffic flow has broken down. Traffic volumes are high, and there are long backups at the intersection. Most vehicles have to wait through one or more green lights to get through.

Figure 2-4: 2010 Median Household Income by Study Area Neighborhood



Source: State, county, and city data based U.S. Census Bureau (Factfinder Quickfacts accessed on Aug. 13, 2012) Neighborhood data based on 2006-2010 American Community Survey (Block Group data downloaded Aug. 10, 2012).

How does economic development fit into the project?

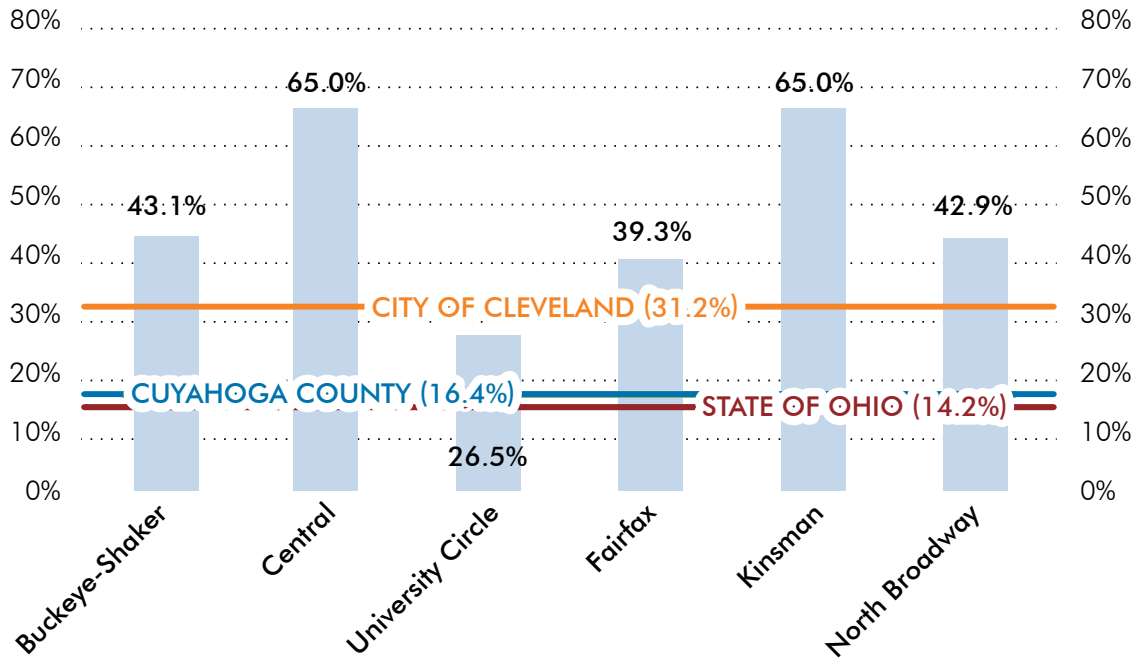
The area between I-77 and University Circle includes a part of Cleveland known as the "Forgotten Triangle." The Forgotten Triangle is bordered roughly by Kinsman Road, Woodland Avenue and Woodhill Road (Figure 2-2, page 2-2) and includes portions of the Central and Kinsman neighborhoods. The loss of manufacturing and other jobs caused people to leave the area over time. U.S. Census Bureau information shows that the population of each neighborhood in the study area has been getting smaller since 1940.

In 2010, the median household income in the study area neighborhoods was less than that of the city, county and state (Figure 2-4). The percentage of people living below poverty level in the study area neighborhoods was more than both the county and state. The percentage of people living below poverty level in all of the study area neighborhoods except University Circle was also more than the city (Figure 2-6, page 2-5).

▲ *Figure 2-5: Vacant tracts of land in the study area could be developed or redeveloped.*

Large vacant tracts of land (Figure 2-5) within the Forgotten Triangle and nearby areas could be used for development and redevelopment.

Figure 2-6: 2010 Percent Persons Below Federal Poverty Level by Study Area Neighborhood



Source: State, county, and city data based U.S. Census Bureau (Factfinder Quickfacts accessed on Aug. 13, 2012) Neighborhood data based on 2006-2010 American Community Survey (Block Group data downloaded Aug. 10, 2012).

The City of Cleveland and GCP are working on a plan to boost economic development in the area. The City of Cleveland Planning Commission is also working with local community development corporations to identify growth activities within and around the Forgotten Triangle. The City is also working with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through a public supported plan to redevelop the brownfield sites within portions of the Forgotten Triangle.

Some of the city's goals in its *Connecting Cleveland 2020 Citywide Plan* and other community development corporation plans include:

- Clean up and reuse brownfield sites
- Reuse, or demolish and rebuild abandoned buildings
- Keep, support or grow existing businesses, institutions and local community developments
- Improve job opportunities for residents

University Circle, one of the city's major economic centers and job hubs, provides more chances for economic growth in and around the Forgotten Triangle area (Figure 2-7, page 2-6). University Circle is one part of Cleveland where employment is growing and is expected to keep growing for skilled and non-skilled workers. The University Circle area (excluding the Cleveland Clinic) is about one square mile with no change in size over the past 50 years. It is bordered by rail lines to the east and south; homes to the east, north and west; and the growing Cleveland Clinic campus to the west. The only opportunities for long-term growth are to the southwest – in and next to the Forgotten Triangle.

The purpose of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project is to provide a transportation system that supports planned economic development. To achieve this, the Opportunity Corridor must improve mobility, connectivity and access in the area between I-77 and University Circle.

▲ *Figure 2-7: Construction near University Circle.*

HOW DO "GOALS AND OBJECTIVES" FIT INTO PURPOSE AND NEED?

Goals and objectives are not the basic transportation needs a project must meet, but they are used along with the needs to study a project. The goals and objectives were not used to choose alternatives, but they were used to guide the design. They helped to define the design features and space requirements of the build alternatives.

The goals and objectives for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project follow.

Goal: Improve public transportation connections

The Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA) stations located in the study area and along East 79th Street have the lowest ridership on the rail system due to limited activity around the sites. A goal of the project is to provide better connections to these stations (Figure 2-8). The project should also support planned economic development that will increase the number of GCRTA riders.

Goal: Improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists

The City of Cleveland and the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) have adopted plans focused on improving bicycle facilities in the area of the project. A goal of the project is to support these efforts by providing safe bike and pedestrian facilities. This will also provide people that live in the neighborhoods with choices about how to travel. Another goal of the project is to improve connections to existing and planned pedestrian and bike paths.

WHERE WILL THE PROJECT BEGIN AND END?

The beginning and end points of the project (logical termini) are determined by the

▲ *Figure 2-8: East 55th Street GCRTA rapid transit station*

purpose and need. The project will begin at I-490/I-77/East 55th Street in the west and end at East 105th Street/Chester Avenue in the east (Figure 2-2, page 2-2). These roads are endpoints for employees, patients, students, residents and tourists who travel in the area. After reaching I-490/I-77/East 55th Street, people can drive to I-77, I-71 and I-90 and connect to western and southern suburbs, or the Cleveland Hopkins International Airport. When people reach East 105th Street/Chester Avenue, they can go on to the University Circle area or other eastern suburbs.

The beginning and end points of the project have been agreed upon by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). They provide an area that is just the right size to meet the project purpose and need. This allows for, but does not require, future projects in the study area or in the region. It also assures that other transportation improvements are not needed for the project to be useful to the public.

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Chapter 3 | ALTERNATIVES

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS CHAPTER?

This chapter describes the alternatives studied during the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project, including the "preferred alternative." The information in this chapter describes the general features of the preferred alternative. Several other reports[1] have in-depth information about the alternatives and detailed design information about the preferred alternative, including:

- *Cleveland Innerbelt Strategic Plan* (July 2004);
- *Opportunity Corridor Draft Strategic Plan* (September 2006);
- *Opportunity Corridor Conceptual Alternatives Study* (October 2010);
- *Early Analysis of West Alternates* (March 2011);
- *Analysis of Central Alternates* (June 2011); and
- *Opportunity Corridor Operational Analysis Technical Memorandum* (May 2012; revised June 2012).

These reports are on the CD included with this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The sections below give basic information about the alternatives. For more information, please refer to the additional reports listed in each section.

HOW WERE THE ALTERNATIVES DEVELOPED?

The alternatives for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project were developed through the Ohio Department of Transportation's (ODOT's) Project Development Process, which uses environmental and engineering studies to find solutions for transportation problems.

ODOT'S PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IS A PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND TRANSPORTATION DECISION-MAKING PROCEDURE THAT OUTLINES PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FROM CONCEPT THROUGH COMPLETION.

The process begins with looking at transportation problems and needs, and studying existing data about an area. As the process moves along, new information is gathered, and engineering designs are refined. Alternatives that don't address the transportation needs, don't meet the project goals, are too expensive or would cause too many impacts are removed from further study. The remaining alternatives are studied in greater detail until one, preferred alternative is chosen.

This DEIS summarizes the major design features of the preferred alternative, and its potential impacts. The information is based on the preliminary engineering design. As the project moves toward final design and construction, the engineering design will be refined even more. The impacts described in this DEIS are based on the amount of land needed to build the new roadway. These amounts are based on:

[1] *These documents are incorporated by reference into this DEIS.*

- The number and width of roadway lanes;
- The number and width of through and turning lanes on side streets;
- The locations and widths of sidewalks, as well as bicycle and walking paths;
- The locations, lengths, heights and widths of roadway and railroad bridges; and
- The features needed for proper roadway drainage.

HOW HAVE THE PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDERS BEEN INVOLVED DURING THE ALTERNATIVES STUDY?

ODOT's Project Development Process includes gathering input from the public and stakeholders before making a decision about a project.

The project includes a plan that sets goals for public and stakeholder involvement and identifies ways to help reach those goals. This helps the public and stakeholders to stay updated and give input as the project moves along. ODOT reached out to potentially affected community members with the following tools:

- Newsletters;
- Community surveys;
- Press releases;
- Community and agency briefings;
- Project website;
- Project brochures;
- Public meetings and workshops;
- Neighborhood and small-group meetings;
- Business community coordination meetings; and
- Interviews with residents and business owners.

ODOT is also using a process called context sensitive solutions, or CSS, to involve study area residents and business owners in the design of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project. ODOT's goals for the CSS process include:

- Understand key concerns of study area residents and business owners;
- Involve stakeholders early and often in the decision-making process;
- Address different types of transportation (bus, walking, transit); and
- Be flexible about the design whenever possible to address stakeholders' concerns.

As part of the CSS process, ODOT has coordinated extensively with those who live, work, own businesses or have other special interest in the study area. In the early planning stages of the project, ODOT held more than 50 meetings with the people, businesses and organizations that could be affected by the project. This helped the project team to understand the problems, needs, goals and objectives for the area.

During the development of alternatives, ODOT coordinated with a project steering committee. The Department is also continuing to work closely with the City of Cleveland and the Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP) as these groups develop their vision for future land use and economic development in southeast Cleveland, including the project study area.

These coordination efforts included 12 public meetings (Figure 3-1); more than 15 business

▲ *Figure 3-1: As part of the CSS process, participants shared ideas with ODOT about how the project could best fit within the community.*

coordination meetings; five neighborhood meetings; and 12 steering committee meetings. During the public and steering committee meetings, participants shared ideas with ODOT about how the project could best fit within the community. Exercises and activities used during the meetings helped ODOT identify community priorities and incorporate them into the project design. This input also helped guide the development and study of project alternatives.

Detailed information about public and stakeholder coordination can be found in Chapter 5 of this DEIS.

HOW HAS PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK CHANGED THE STUDY?

Feedback from public and stakeholders has led to several changes that help the project better meet the community's priorities and needs and avoid or minimize potential impacts.

For example, the path of the roadway has been shifted in several places between East 55th Street and Quincy Avenue to minimize the number of homes and businesses affected by the project. These changes minimized impacts in the St. Hyacinth area, as well as the planned expansion of two major employers (Orlando Baking Company and Miceli's Dairy Products). In some areas, such as the St. Hyacinth neighborhood, retaining walls have been added to minimize impacts to homes and businesses.

The design was also updated to avoid impacting community resources such as the Kenneth Johnson Recreational Center, churches and historic properties. For instance, the current design includes narrower lane widths on East 105th Street north of Park Lane, which is where the project reconnects to the existing streets. In this area, the lanes would be narrower than Cuyahoga County design standards to match the existing lane widths. This eliminates impacts to city-owned Wade Park and lessens impacts to the Wade Park Historic District. Another design change included keeping Quincy Avenue between East 105th Street and Woodhill Road open for emergency vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. This change was made at the request of the City of Cleveland and was designed to minimize impacts related to closing Quincy Avenue.

Another example of how the public shaped the project is the "quadrant roadway" at I-490 and East 55th Street (Figure 3-2). The quadrant roadway is a short new roadway that would be built near East 59th Street to route traffic between East 55th Street and the proposed boulevard. This feature was added based on the community's desire to keep full access to and from East 55th Street. It will also help make accessing the East 55th Street transit station safer and easier for pedestrians.

Some design features were added to improve the look of the roadway. These items – shown in Figure 1-3 (Proposed Boulevard Section Views) on pages 1-3 and 1-4 – included mast arm traffic signal supports; combined street and pedestrian lighting; grass tree lawns (parkways); street trees; grassy roadway median with stormwater treatment measures; retaining walls and bridge abutments with form-liner surfaces and colored surface sealer; and benches, trash receptacles, and bike racks.

▲ *Figure 3-2: The "quadrant roadway" at the I-490-East 55th Street intersection would be built near East 59th Street to route traffic between East 55th Street and the proposed boulevard.*

WHAT IS THE NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE?

The No-Build Alternative is what would happen within the study area if no project were built. It includes minor, regular short-term safety and maintenance efforts. The No-Build Alternative also includes other major projects that would affect transportation in the study area. Two such projects are in the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor study area: the Cleveland Innerbelt improvements to I-77 and I-90, and the reconfiguration of the Cedar Avenue-Cedar Glen Parkway-Carnegie Avenue-Martin Luther King Jr. Drive intersection.

The Cleveland Innerbelt improvements to I-77 and I-90 would be to the west and north of the study area. The Cedar Avenue-Cedar Glen Parkway-Carnegie Avenue-Martin Luther King Jr. Drive intersection reconfiguration is part of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority's (GCRTA) reconstruction of the Cedar-University Rapid Transit Station, which is located east of the study area and along the GCRTA Red Line at Cedar Glen Parkway.

The No-Build Alternative does not meet the purpose and need for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project (see Chapter 2). This alternative would keep existing connections between I-77 and University Circle, but it would not improve these connections. This alternative would not improve mobility or levels of service for traffic traveling to, from and within the area between I-77 and University Circle. This alternative also would not create the transportation infrastructure needed to support revival and redevelopment in and around the study area.

The No-Build Alternative is not recommended as a reasonable solution, but it will continue to be referenced throughout this DEIS as a way to compare the impacts, benefits and costs of the preferred alternative.

WHAT OTHER ALTERNATIVES WERE STUDIED BUT ARE NO LONGER BEING CONSIDERED?

ODOT began studying alternatives for the Opportunity Corridor during the Cleveland Innerbelt study, which began in 2000. During this study, alternatives were developed to address the transportation needs associated with Cleveland's Innerbelt Bridge. The alternatives studied included improving existing roadways, improving transit, providing lanes for High Occupancy Vehicles (HOV), and other ways to manage traffic volumes using technology. Several of these alternatives were recommended for further study either by ODOT or others.

As part of the *Innerbelt Strategic Plan* (July 2004), concepts were also developed to shift some traffic from Cleveland's Innerbelt Bridge to other roads. One specific concept was to provide a better transportation connection between I-490 and University Circle. ODOT studied both freeway and boulevard alternatives to make this connection. These alternatives – which were originally known as the University Circle Access Freeway and the University Circle Access Boulevard – were presented to the public during the Innerbelt study. The freeway alternative was not studied further due to costs, estimated property impacts and public opposition.

ODOT decided that the boulevard alternative should be studied further as part of separate project, which came to be known as the Opportunity Corridor project. Four possible paths for a new boulevard were developed during the Innerbelt study and became the starting point for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project. For additional details about the freeway and boulevard alternatives looked at during the Innerbelt study, please refer to the *Innerbelt Strategic Plan* (July 2004). This report is on the CD included with this DEIS.

Based on the recommendations of the Innerbelt study, all of the alternatives studied for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project involved building an urban boulevard – a new road with a wide median and traffic lights at intersections. The first round of alternatives – called conceptual alternatives – was described in the *Opportunity Corridor Draft Strategic Plan*

(September 2006) and the *Opportunity Corridor Conceptual Alternatives Study* (October 2010).

Using the findings of the Innerbelt study as well as stakeholder input, four conceptual alternatives were developed to make the connection between I-490 and University Circle. The alternatives included improving existing streets – such as East 55th Street and Woodland Avenue – as well new roadways both north and south of the Norfolk Southern (NS)/GCRTA rail trench.

Generally speaking, new roadways north of the NS/GCRTA rail trench were not studied more because they would not support the planned economic development in the Forgotten Triangle. The alternative that widened East 55th Street and Woodland Avenue was also removed from further study because the transportation benefits it would provide were not enough to justify the relatively high impacts to community facilities, cemeteries and churches. Alternatives south of the NS/GCRTA rail trench were studied further in the *Opportunity Corridor Conceptual Alternatives Study*.

The conceptual alternatives were presented to the public during a series of large, open-house public meetings in September 2009. Details about those meetings can be found in Chapter 5 of this DEIS. After the September 2009 meetings, the alternatives were refined based on public input. As part of this process, the study area was divided into three sections (Figure 3-3), including:

Figure 3-3: Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Study Sections

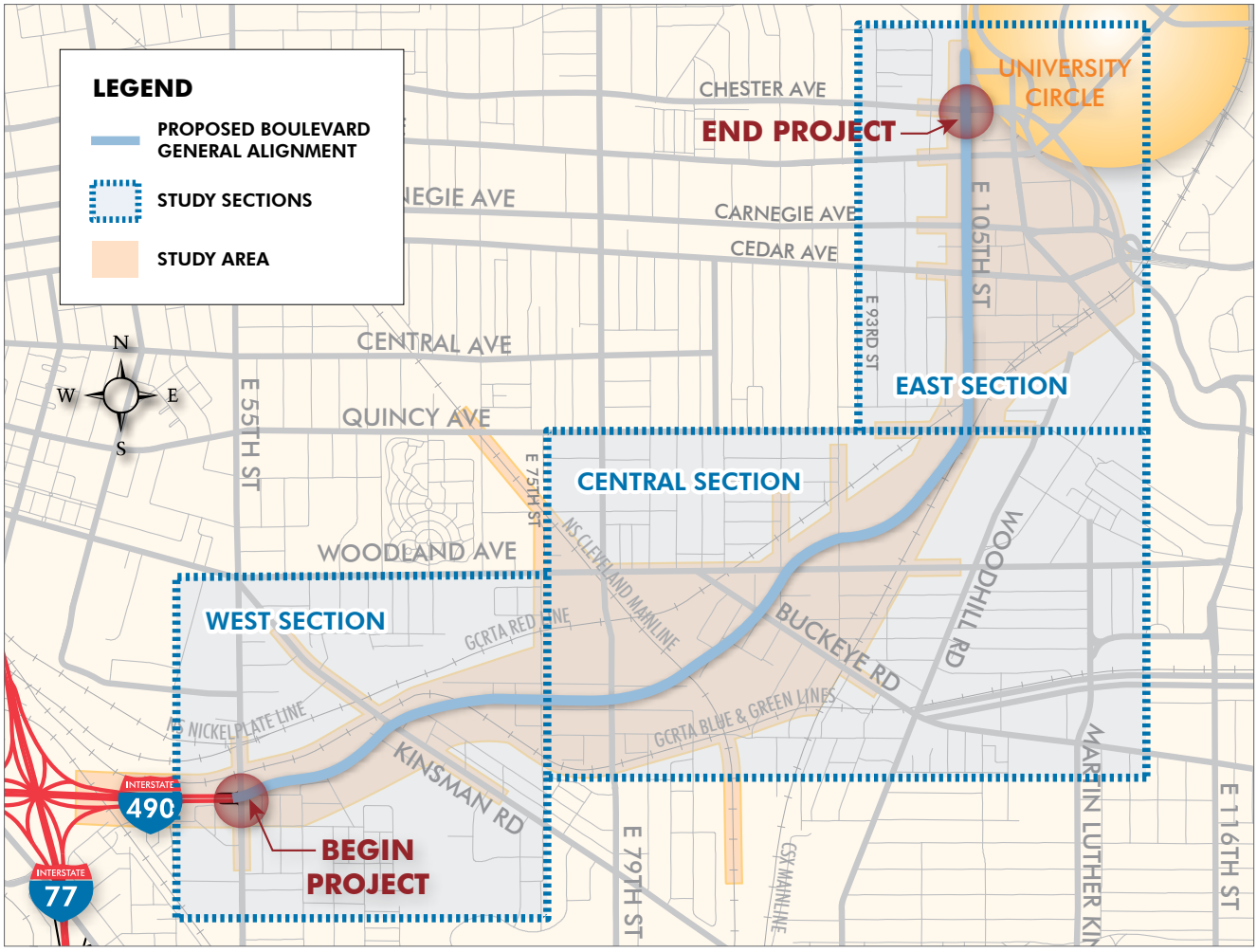


Figure 3-4: Discontinuous Woodland Avenue

Figure 3-5: Continuous Woodland Avenue

- **West Section:** Located between I-77 and East 75th Street. Includes the East 55th Street-I-490 intersection.

- **Central Section:** Located between East 75th Street and Quincy Avenue.

- **East Section:** Located along East 105th Street from Quincy Avenue to Chester Avenue.

Three alternatives were studied in each of these sections.

As part of the *Opportunity Corridor Conceptual Alternatives Study*, several alternatives were removed from further study. Five alternatives were recommended for more study: two in the West Section, two in the Central Section and one in the East Section. The alternatives in each of the sections could be combined with one another to form one complete build alternative for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor. By combining the section alternatives in as many ways as possible, the *Opportunity Corridor Conceptual Alternatives Study* recommended four ways of improving the entire project corridor.

The conceptual alternatives were presented to the public during a series of large, open-house and neighborhood meetings in October 2010. Details about those meetings can be found in Chapter 5 of this DEIS. After the October 2010 meetings, two specific parts of the alternatives were studied in more detail:

- **West Section:** One alternative would include an "at-grade" or standard intersection with traffic lights at I-490 and East 55th Street. The other alternative would build a bridge on East 55th Street over I-490 and the proposed boulevard. A short new roadway, or "quadrant roadway," (Figure 3-2, page 3-3) would be built near East 59th Street to route traffic between East 55th Street and the proposed boulevard.

- **Central Section:** One alternative would create a series of turns along Woodland Avenue to continue travel in an east-west direction. This would result in a gap along Woodland Avenue, called the discontinuity of Woodland Avenue (Figure 3-4). The other alternative would maintain Woodland Avenue as a continuous roadway with no gaps (Figure 3-5).

Two reports summarize the results of these studies: *Early Analysis of West Alternates* (March

2011), and *Analysis of Central Alternates* (June 2011).

The at-grade standard intersection at I-490 and East 55th Street and the proposed boulevard was eliminated from further study because:

- An at-grade intersection would cause problems for pedestrians and access to surrounding neighborhoods and the GCRTA Rapid Transit Station at East 55th Street;
- Further engineering design showed that an at-grade intersection could not be built without very high costs to redesign and reconstruct the I-77/I-490 interchange; and
- An at-grade intersection would cause problems with traffic flow and safety along I-490 between the I-77 ramps and East 55th Street.

The alternative that included the discontinuity of Woodland Avenue was also eliminated from further study because:

- A continuous Woodland Avenue (Figure 3-5, page 3-6) would better meet the project's purpose and need. Woodland Avenue is an east-west main route that connects to areas within and next to the project study area. It is an important part of improving traffic flow and connections among roadways, and it also directly links neighborhoods southeast of the Central Business District, including several located right next to University Circle.
- The City of Cleveland, the Buckeye Area Development Corporation, and the majority of the general public preferred to keep Woodland Avenue as a continuous roadway.

After these alternatives were eliminated, one alternative remained in each section. These three alternatives were combined to form a single preferred alternative for the entire Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project.

The preferred alternative was presented to the public and project stakeholders at public meetings in July 2011. Based on the comments and input received at those meetings, ODOT decided to evaluate in detail the preferred alternative in this DEIS.

WHAT IS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE?

The preferred alternative involves building an urban boulevard with traffic lights at intersections from the I-490-East 55th Street intersection to the East 105th Street-Chester Avenue intersection (Figure 3-6, page 3-8). The proposed boulevard will have two westbound through-lanes, but the number of eastbound through-lanes will vary.

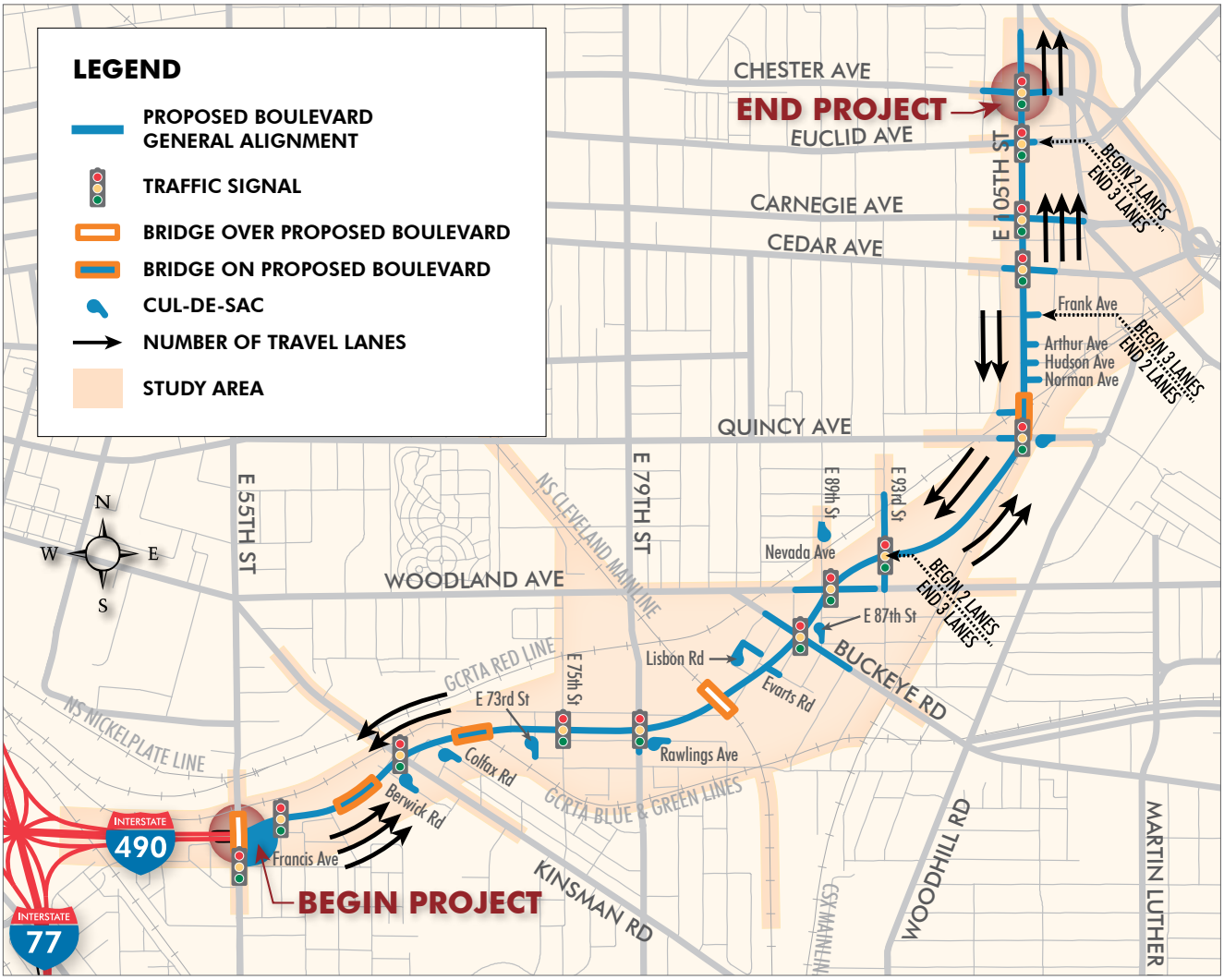
The project includes three eastbound through-lanes between I-490 and East 93rd Street. In general, the roadway will have two through-lanes between East 93rd Street and Chester Avenue, but the roadway between Frank Avenue and Euclid Avenue will include a third eastbound through-lane. Left- and right-turn lanes will also be added at many of the intersections. Please refer to the *Opportunity Corridor Operational Analysis Technical Memorandum* (May 2012; revised June 2012) for more details on travel lane requirements. This report is on the CD included with this DEIS.

The proposed boulevard generally will be built where no roads exist now except for the stretch from Quincy Avenue to Chester Avenue, which will be built on existing East 105th Street. The boulevard will include a low, grassy median between East 55th Street and Quincy Avenue. However, the grassy median and tree lawns will not be included on the bridges. The proposed boulevard will also include a walking/biking path on the south side of the roadway, and a sidewalk on the north side.

The preferred alternative will have traffic lights at Kinsman Road, East 75th Street, East 79th Street, Buckeye Road, Woodland Avenue, East 93rd Street, Quincy Avenue, Cedar Avenue, Carnegie Avenue, Euclid Avenue and Chester Avenue.

Access to East 55th Street will be provided by a quadrant roadway – a new two-way street that

Figure 3-6: Preferred Alternative



will be built south of the new boulevard and near East 59th Street. As shown in Figure 3-2 on page 3-3, it will have traffic lights at both East 55th Street and the boulevard, and it will allow cars to access both roadways.

The preferred alternative also will change some local streets:

- **Francis Avenue** – closure between East 55th Street and East 57th Street;
- **Berwick Road, Colfax Road** and **East 73rd Street** – cul-de-sacs;
- **Rawlings Avenue** – cul-de-sac; closure between East 75th Street and East 79th Street;
- **Lisbon Road** – cul-de-sac; connection with Grand Avenue near Evarts Road;
- **Tennyson Road** – closure between Evarts and Buckeye roads;
- **East 87th Street** – closure between Buckeye Road and Woodland Avenue;
- **East 89th Street** – closure between Woodland and Nevada avenues; and
- **Quincy Avenue** – closure between East 105th Street and Woodhill Road; design will

maintain access for bicycles, pedestrians and emergency services.

The preferred alternative will build these bridges:

- East 55th Street over the proposed boulevard;
- Proposed boulevard over the Kingsbury Run Valley (two bridges);
- Proposed boulevard over the GCRTA Blue and Green lines (two bridges);
- Norfolk Southern Railway (NS) Cleveland Mainline over the proposed boulevard (two bridges); and
- Proposed boulevard over the NS Nickel Plate/ GCRTA Red Line.

HOW WILL THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE MEET THE PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED?

The preferred alternative will meet the purpose and need (see Chapter 2) for the project by:

- Improving "system linkage" – connections among the roads, neighborhoods and businesses – with an east-west arterial street between I-77 and University Circle;
- Improving mobility – the movement of people and goods – to, from and within the area between I-77 and the University Circle; and
- Creating the infrastructure to support planned revival and redevelopment in area in and around the "Forgotten Triangle," which is bordered by Kinsman Road, Woodland Avenue and Woodhill Road.

HOW WILL THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE MEET THE PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES?

The preferred alternative will address project goals and objectives including the following:

- Improve connectivity among transit facilities such as GCRTA stations;
- Support redevelopment plans that could increase patronage within the transit system;
- Provide multiple transportation mode options by including safe bicycle and pedestrian-friendly facilities; and
- Improve connections to existing and planned multimodal facilities in and near the study area.

WILL THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE CHANGE?

The preferred alternative could be changed based on comments received on this DEIS and at the upcoming public hearing. Public and stakeholder input has been an important part of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project from its beginning, so ODOT expects changes to the preferred alternative to be minimal. Any design changes made since the publication and review of this DEIS will be discussed in the Final EIS.

HOW WOULD THE PROJECT BE BUILT?

The proposed boulevard between the I-490-East 55th Street and Quincy Avenue generally will be built where no roads exist today, but the stretch from Quincy Avenue to Chester Avenue will be built on existing East 105th Street. Roadway and bridge construction will follow typical standards and practices.

Access to adjoining properties will be maintained during construction, and lane closures will be avoided or minimized.

WHEN WOULD THE PROJECT BE BUILT?

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project likely will be constructed in phases. A preliminary phasing plan has been developed as part of this DEIS. It is based on current

Figure 3-7: Construction Sections

traffic conditions, maintenance of traffic during construction, constructability, and traffic flow in the finished section.

The preliminary phasing plan includes two sections (Figure 3-7), but it could be changed during final design or as funding sources become available:

- **Section 1:** Quincy Avenue to Chester Avenue
- **Section 2:** I-490-East 55th Street to Quincy Avenue

If a phased approach is used, the completed portion of the corridor will be open as soon as possible so that some benefits would be realized before the entire corridor is fully built.

HOW MUCH WOULD IT COST TO BUILD THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE?

The total cost of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project is estimated at $331.3 million. The project estimate considers all currently known work required to build the project – the costs of final design, project administration and management, land acquisition, utility relocation, implementation of environmental commitments and mitigation measures, and construction activities. It also assumes the project is constructed in two phases – as outlined above – and considers the effects of inflation. The current cost estimate assumes construction of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project will be finished in 2018.

HOW WOULD THE PROJECT BE FUNDED?

ODOT and the City of Cleveland do not have enough money now to design and build the entire Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project; however, they have received a portion of the project's costs from the Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC) to build Section 1.

The TRAC was established by the Ohio General Assembly in 1997. Its job is to develop and oversee a selection process for projects costing more than $12 million that add transportation capacity, and that are critical to the mobility, economic development and quality of life of the citizens of Ohio.

The TRAC funds currently slated for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project are enough to complete the next phase of the project, which is the detailed design of Section 1. Additional money will be needed to complete the design of Section 2 and to construct the entire project.

ODOT is evaluating several potential funding sources to pay for the project, including local, state and federal funds, as well as private funding through a public-private partnership.

Chapter 4 | ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES *and* IMPACTS

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS CHAPTER?

This chapter describes the human and natural resources within the study area. This chapter also discusses the potential impacts and benefits of the project on these resources, as well as ways to reduce or avoid impacts. Building the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project would use many different resources such as land, construction worker labor, and materials such as concrete and steel. In most cases, these resources cannot be fully recovered once they are used. However, there is no shortage of any of these items, and using them to build the project would not change their availability for other uses.

The information in this chapter is based upon the documents[1] listed in Figure 4-2 on page 4-2. These reports are included on the CD included with this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The sections that follow give basic information about the existing resources and the potential impacts and benefits of the project.

WHAT TOPICS ARE DISCUSSED IN DETAIL IN THIS CHAPTER?

The study area is in the City of Cleveland. It is urban and does not have any major natural resources such as wetlands, streams or surface water bodies (Figure 4-1). Also,

[1] *These documents are incorporated by reference into this DEIS.*

▲ *Figure 4-1: The study area is urban in nature and does not have any major natural resources; however, it does include many human-made resources.*

Figure 4-2: Chapter 4 Resources[2]

- *OEPA Drinking Water Source Protection Areas and Public Water System Wells and Intakes Map, Cuyahoga County, Ohio* (Ohio 2009, printed January 2013);
- *Opportunity Corridor Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) Screening* (November 2009);
- *Level 2 Ecological Survey Report for Opportunity Corridor (PID 77333)* (January 2010);
- *Phase I History/Architecture Survey Report for the Opportunity Corridor Project* (January 2010);
- *Phase I Archaeological Literature Review, Prehistoric Context, and Archaeological Sensitivity Assessment for the Opportunity Corridor Project* (February 2010);
- *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Opportunity Corridor Project Area* (April 2011);
- *Opportunity Corridor Operational Analysis Technical Memorandum* (May 2012, revised June 2012);
- *Opportunity Corridor Certified Traffic Plates* (June 2012);
- *Opportunity Corridor Indirect and Cumulative Effects Assessment Technical Memorandum* (July 2012);
- *Opportunity Corridor Relocation Assistance Program (RAP) Survey* (September 2012);
- *Opportunity Corridor CO Hot-Spot (Microscale) Analysis Report* (November 2012);
- *Opportunity Corridor Qualitative Mobile Source Air Toxics Analysis Report* (November 2012);
- *Phase I Archaeological Resource Review and Disturbance Assessment for the Proposed Opportunity Corridor Project* (November 2012);
- *Opportunity Corridor Noise Analysis Report* (December 2012);
- *Opportunity Corridor Stormwater Summary* (December 2012); and
- *Opportunity Corridor Environmental Justice Technical Memorandum* (April 2013).

[2] *These documents are incorporated by reference into this DEIS.*

the study area does not include farmland or agricultural activity; however, it does include a number of neighborhoods and human resources such as homes, businesses, churches, schools, parks, recreation centers, historic properties, public transportation facilities, and other transportation features.

As noted in Chapter 3, the No-Build Alternative does not meet the purpose and need for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project. As a result, it was not recommended as a reasonable alternative. However, the No-Build Alternative is discussed throughout this chapter as a way to compare the impacts, benefits and costs of the preferred alternative.

WHAT DOES THE STUDY AREA LOOK LIKE?

The study area consists of a mix of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational land uses (Figure 4-3). In general, land use varies from parcel to parcel (Figure 4-4, page 4-3). For example, residential properties are located next to industrial properties. Mixing very different land uses very close to one another does not usually work well because the land owners have different goals and objectives. When this occurs, the land uses are called "incompatible." The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor study area is filled with incompatible land

▲ *Figure 4-3: The study area consists of varying land uses including residential, commercial, industrial and recreational properties.*

Figure 4-4: Existing Land Use in the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Project Study Area

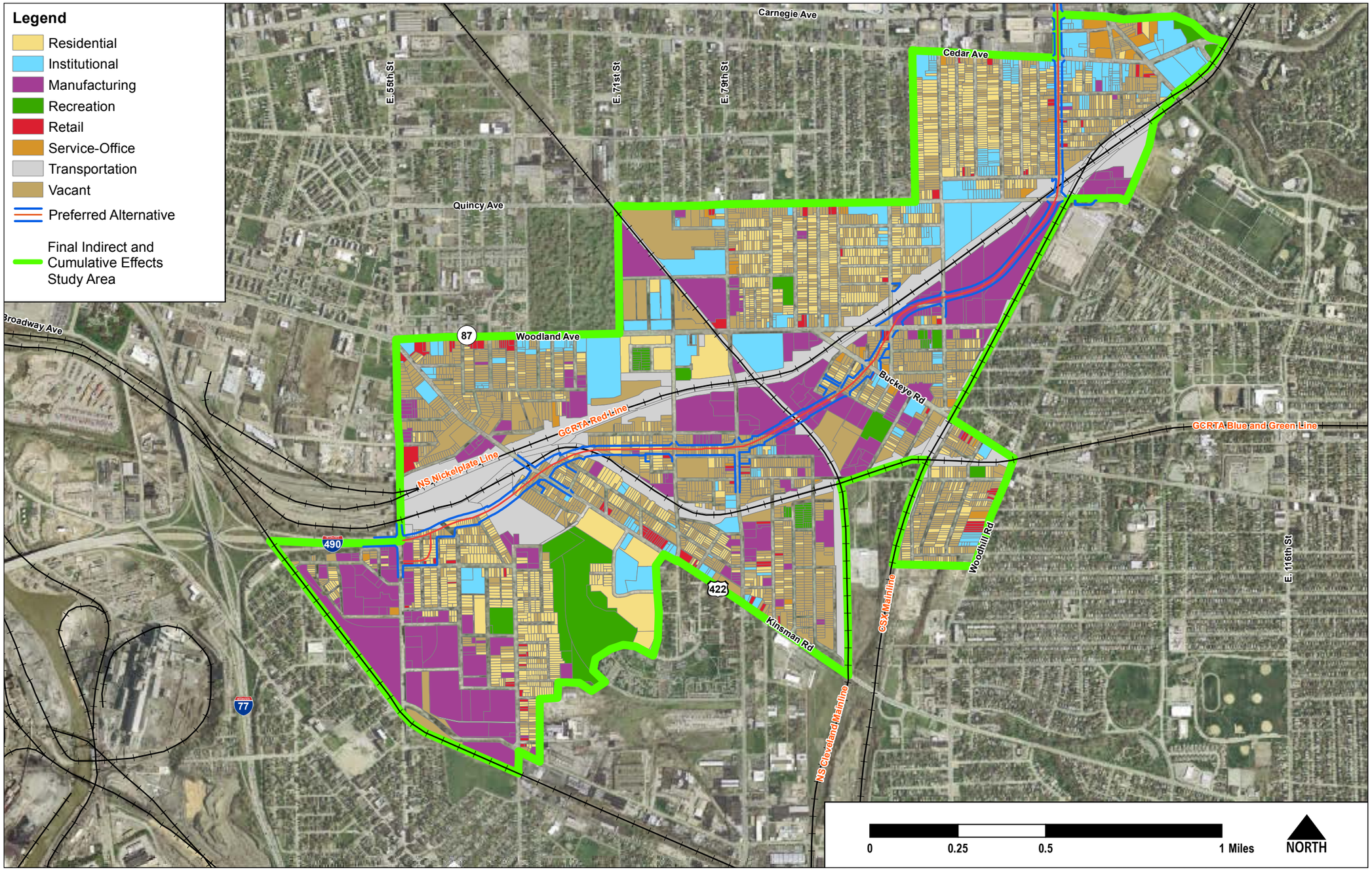
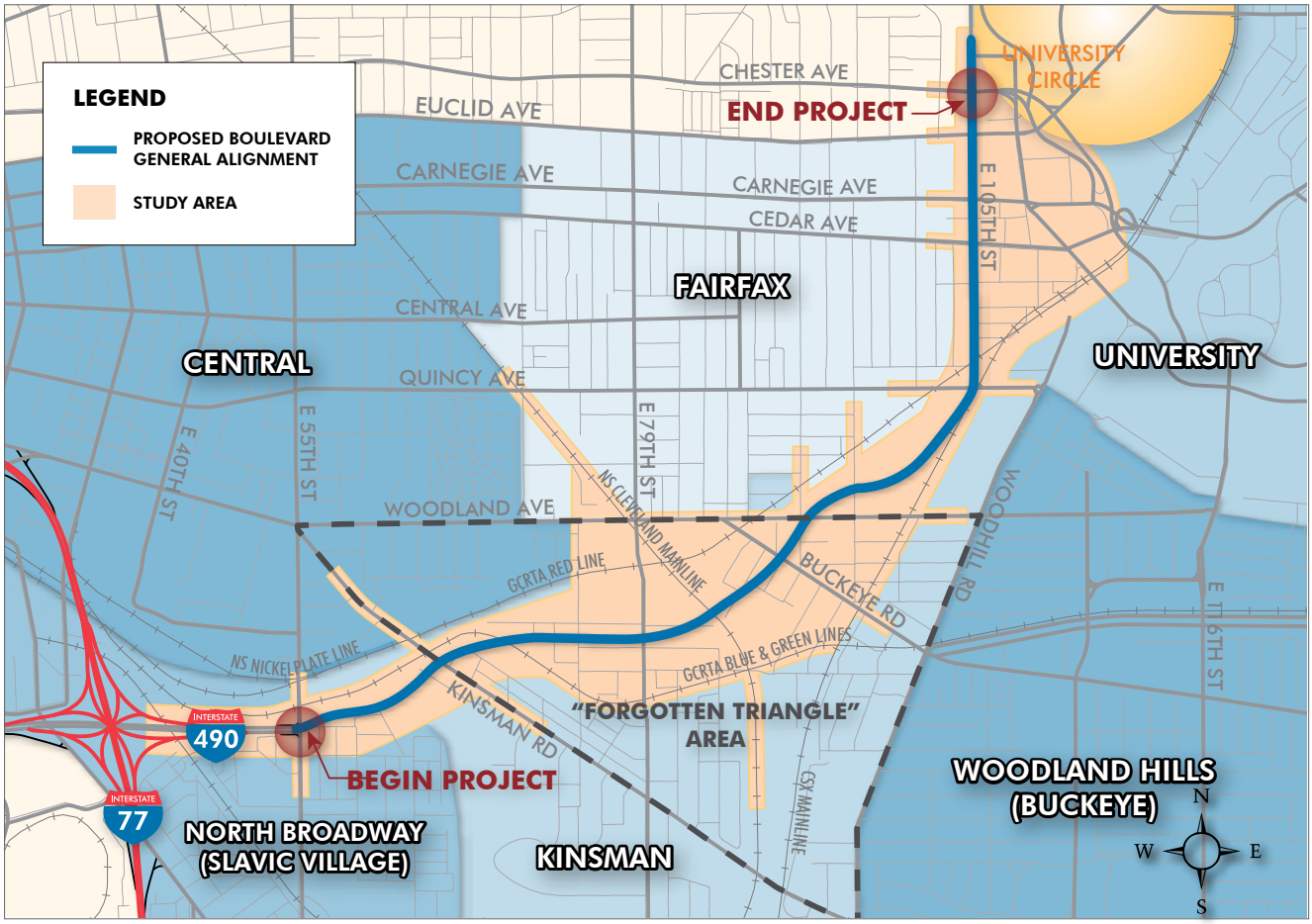


Figure 4-5: Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Project Neighborhoods



uses. The City of Cleveland is working to address this issue as part of its ongoing planning efforts.

Six neighborhoods are partially located within the study area including Buckeye, Central, Fairfax, Kinsman, North Broadway (Slavic Village) and University Circle (Figure 4-5). As shown in Table 4-1, the population of these neighborhoods has steadily declined since 1940. The loss of population is due to

Table 4-1: Population by Study Area Neighborhood

	YEAR				% CHANGE
NEIGHBORHOOD	1940	1970	2000	2010	(1940-2010)
Buckeye	19,537	18,496	16,093	9,517	-51%
Central	62,038	27,280	12,107	11,687	-81%
Fairfax	35,456	22,157	7,352	6,284	-82%
Kinsman	20,139	15,361	5,842	4,246	-79%
North Broadway (Slavic Village)	21,003	13,424	9,049	6,060	-71%
University Circle	17,221	12,804	9,469	7,848	-54%

several factors, including the loss of local manufacturing jobs and the overall shift from railroads to trucks to move goods and products. Also, the rail lines – which once served the industries in the area – and the Kingsbury Run Valley are now barriers to local access.

These changes caused local businesses to leave the area for locations with better access to the Interstate and new roads to support their needs. As businesses closed or relocated, job opportunities declined. Residents also began moving to other areas.

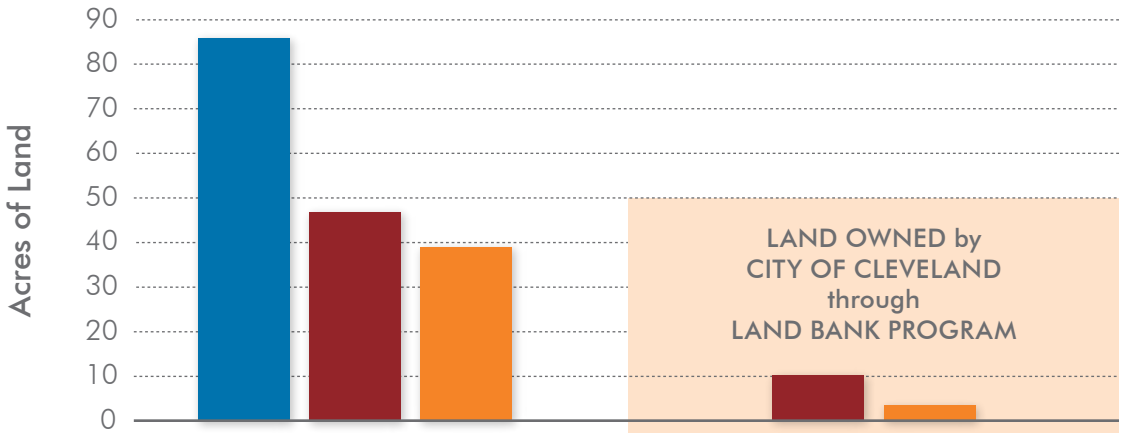
The decrease in population, combined with the recent economic recession, has led to a number of other trends affecting the area. Overall, approximately 29 percent of the land in or near the project area is currently vacant (Figure 4-6), and the City of Cleveland has increased its efforts to demolish vacant and abandoned structures. The increased number of vacant lots has left areas where only a few houses remain. Industrial sites no longer in use are not maintained. Lack of maintenance and abandonment have led to the demolition of some local cultural and historic resources. Property values and the tax base have also fallen, and there has been limited economic development and outside investment in the area. Declining populations and challenging economic conditions have also caused area churches and schools to close.

WOULD THE PROJECT BE CONSISTENT WITH PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS AND LOCAL LAND USE PLANS?

The City of Cleveland is working on an overall strategy to promote redevelopment and renewal in southeast Cleveland, including the area known as the "Forgotten Triangle" – an area bordered roughly by Kinsman Road, Woodland Avenue and Woodhill Road (Figure 4-5, page 4-4). The No-Build Alternative would not result in any changes to land use.

▲ *Figure 4-6: Approximately 29 percent of the land in or near the project area is currently vacant.*

Figure 4-7: Land Needed to Build the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Project



	(acres)	(acres / percentage)
PERMANENT ROW	46.9	10.2 / 21.75%
TEMPORARY EASEMENT	39.0	3.5 / 8.97%
TOTAL LAND NEEDED	**85.9**	**13.7 / 15.95%**

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project is consistent with planned development and local land use plans. The project is one part of the City's overall strategy to promote redevelopment and renewal. The project would require the new boulevard to be built on some existing residential, commercial and industrial land; however, these changes are in line with the city's comprehensive plan and efforts by both City of Cleveland and area community development corporations (CDCs).[3]

HOW MUCH LAND WOULD BE NEEDED TO BUILD THE PROJECT?

About 46.9 acres of land – called permanent right of way (ROW) – would be needed to build the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project. Approximately 39.0 acres of additional land – called temporary easement – would be needed on a short-term basis while the project is being built. Some of the land needed to build the project is owned by the City of Cleveland through its Land Bank Program. Figure 4-7 summarizes the total land needed to build the project, including the land that is owned by the city's Land Bank Program. Figures 4-10 through 4-19, pages 4-8 through 4-17, show the location of the new boulevard and the land needed to build it. The No-Build Alternative would not require any new land because it does not include any major transportation improvements or other major construction activities.

WOULD ANY HOMES, BUSINESSES OR CHURCHES BE RELOCATED?

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project would cause homes and businesses to be relocated, including Greater Roman Baptist Church, 8709 Buckeye Road (Figure 4-8, page 4-7). Table 4-2 on page 4-7 includes a summary of estimated relocations by neighborhood. Figures 4-10 through 4-19, pages 4-8 through 4-17, show the buildings affected by the project. An affected building may contain more than one residential dwelling unit or business occupant.

[3] *Additional information on the City's proposed land use plan can be found at: http://planning.city.cleveland.oh.us/cwp/landuseZoning.htm*

Table 4-2: Estimated Relocations by Study Area Neighborhood

NEIGHBORHOOD (Figure 4-5, page 4-4)	RESIDENTIAL		COMMERCIAL		CHURCH
	BUILDINGS	UNITS	BUILDINGS	OCCUPANTS	BUILDINGS
Central	0	0	0	0	0
Kinsman	24	24	12	7	1
Slavic Village (Figure 4-9)	35	43	3	2	0
Fairfax	3	3	7	4	0
Buckeye	0	0	0	0	0
University Circle	2	6	3	3	0
Total	**64**	**76**	**25**	**16**	**1**

▲ *Figure 4-8: Greater Roman Baptist Church, 8709 Buckeye Road, would be relocated by the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project.*

A Relocation Assistance Program (RAP) survey for the project showed feasible residential and business relocation sites within and near the study area. The RAP survey of the local market was conducted within a five-mile radius of the study area; therefore, residents and businesses that must move because of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project could choose to relocate close to their original locations. One possible exception to this could be finding a new location for a salvage yard currently on East 55th Street. Local regulations require that businesses such as salvage yards be located in areas that avoid incompatible land uses.

▲ *Figure 4-9: The Slavic Village area has the highest number of residential relocations.*

Figure 4-10: Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Project Preferred Alternative Plan / Map 1 of 10 – KEY

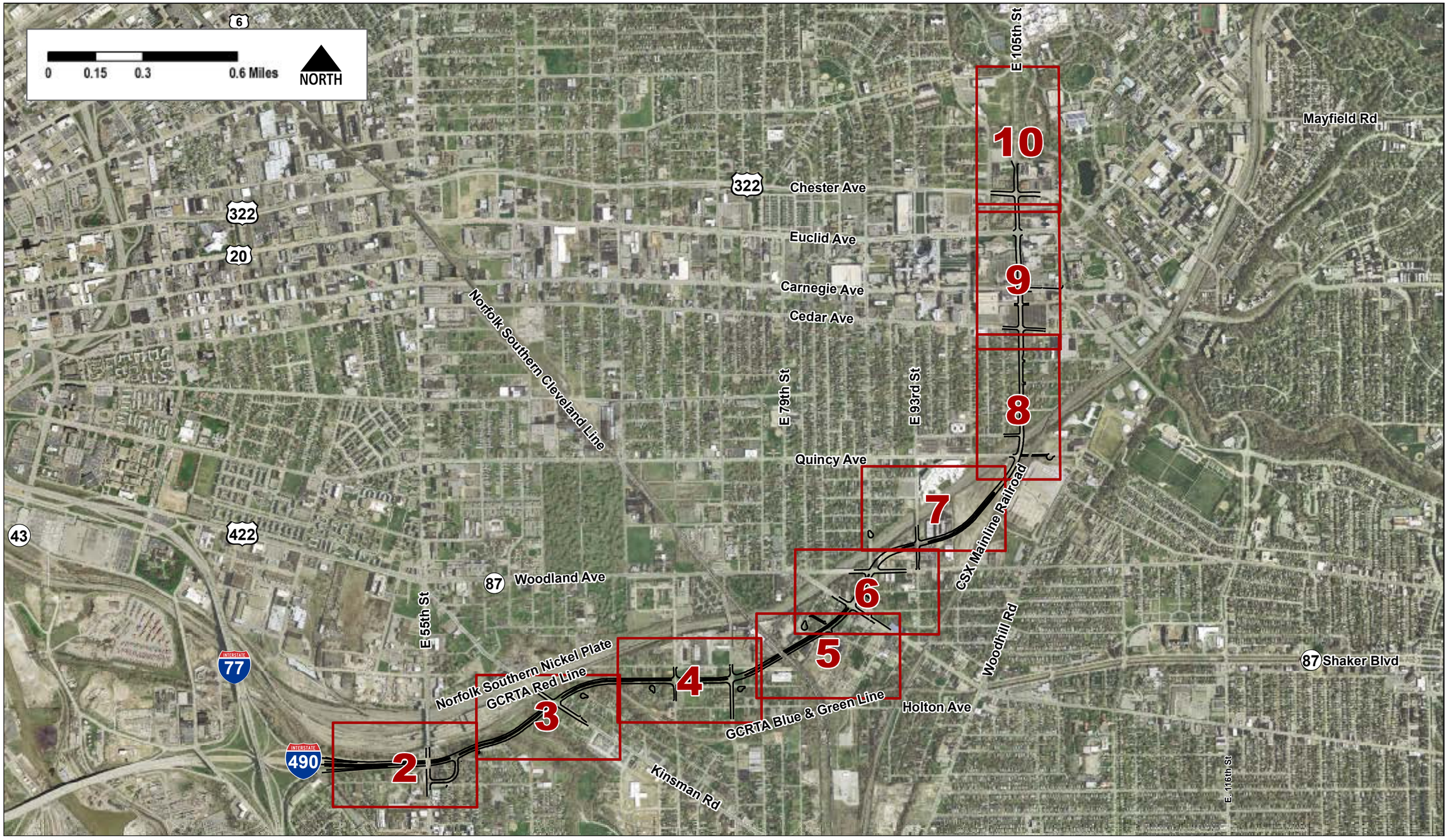


Figure 4-11: Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Project Preferred Alternative Plan / Map 2 of 10

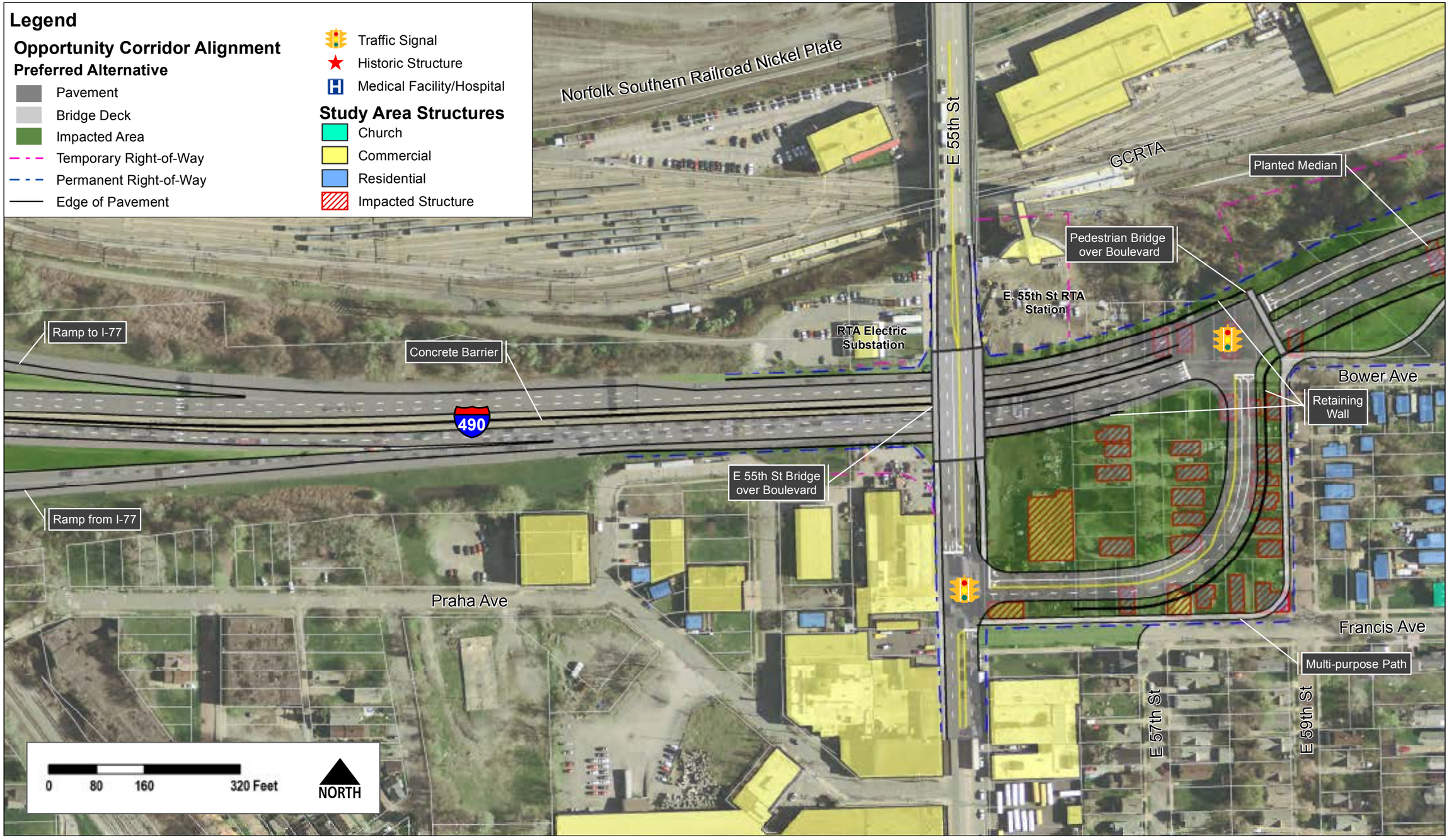


Figure 4-12: Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Project Preferred Alternative Plan / Map 3 of 10

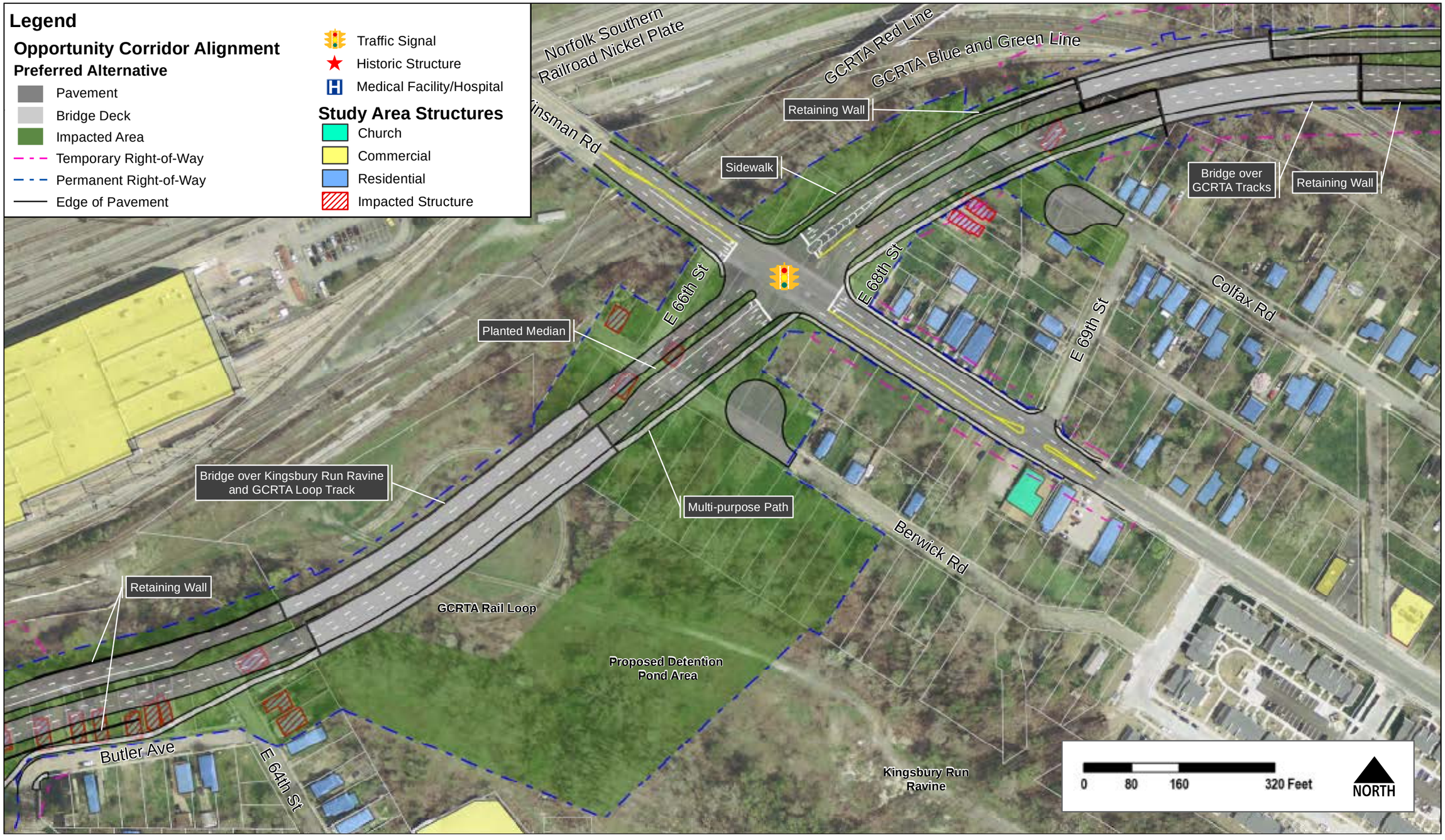


Figure 4-13: Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Project Preferred Alternative Plan / Map 4 of 10

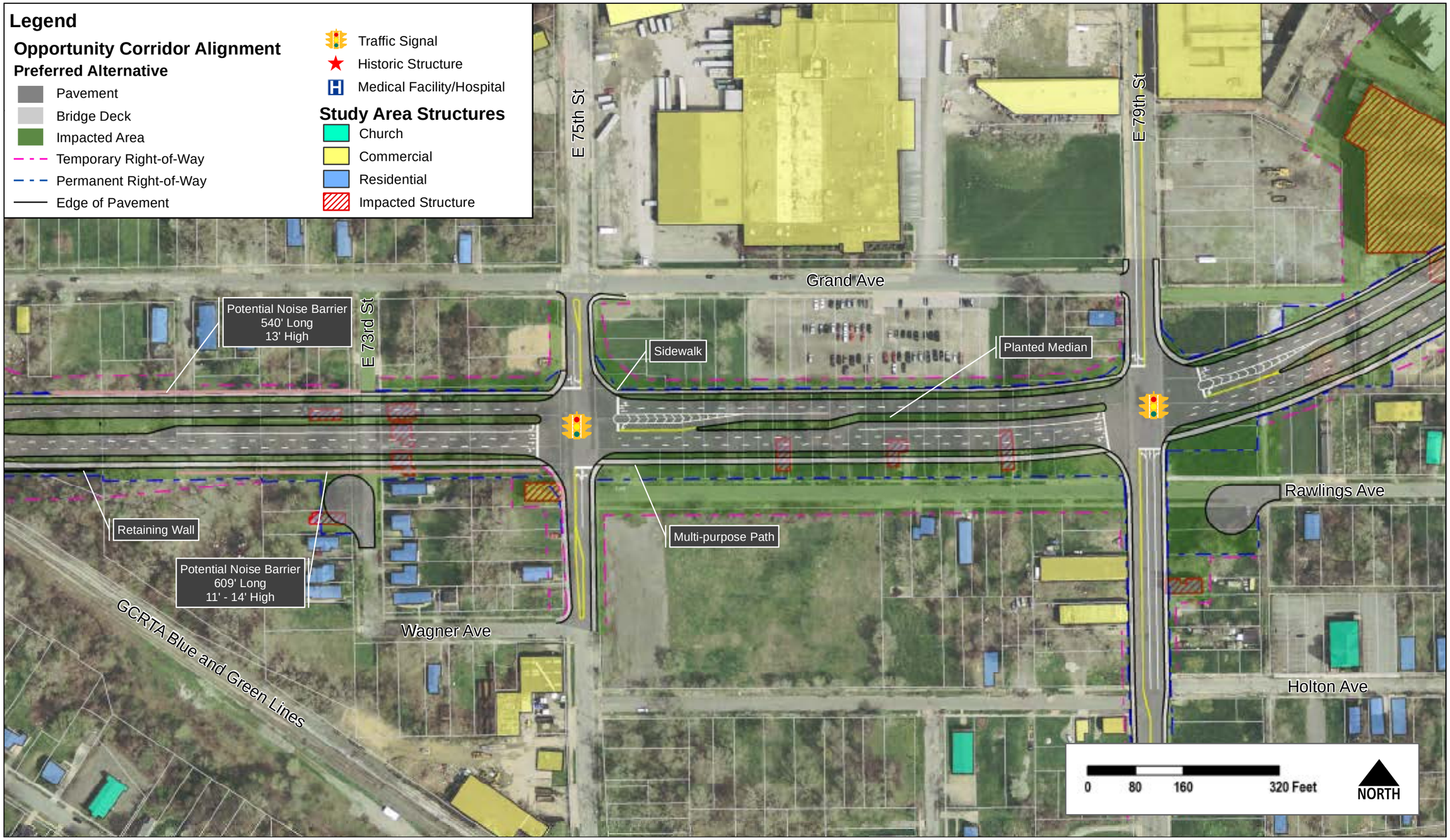


Figure 4-14: Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Project Preferred Alternative Plan / Map 5 of 10

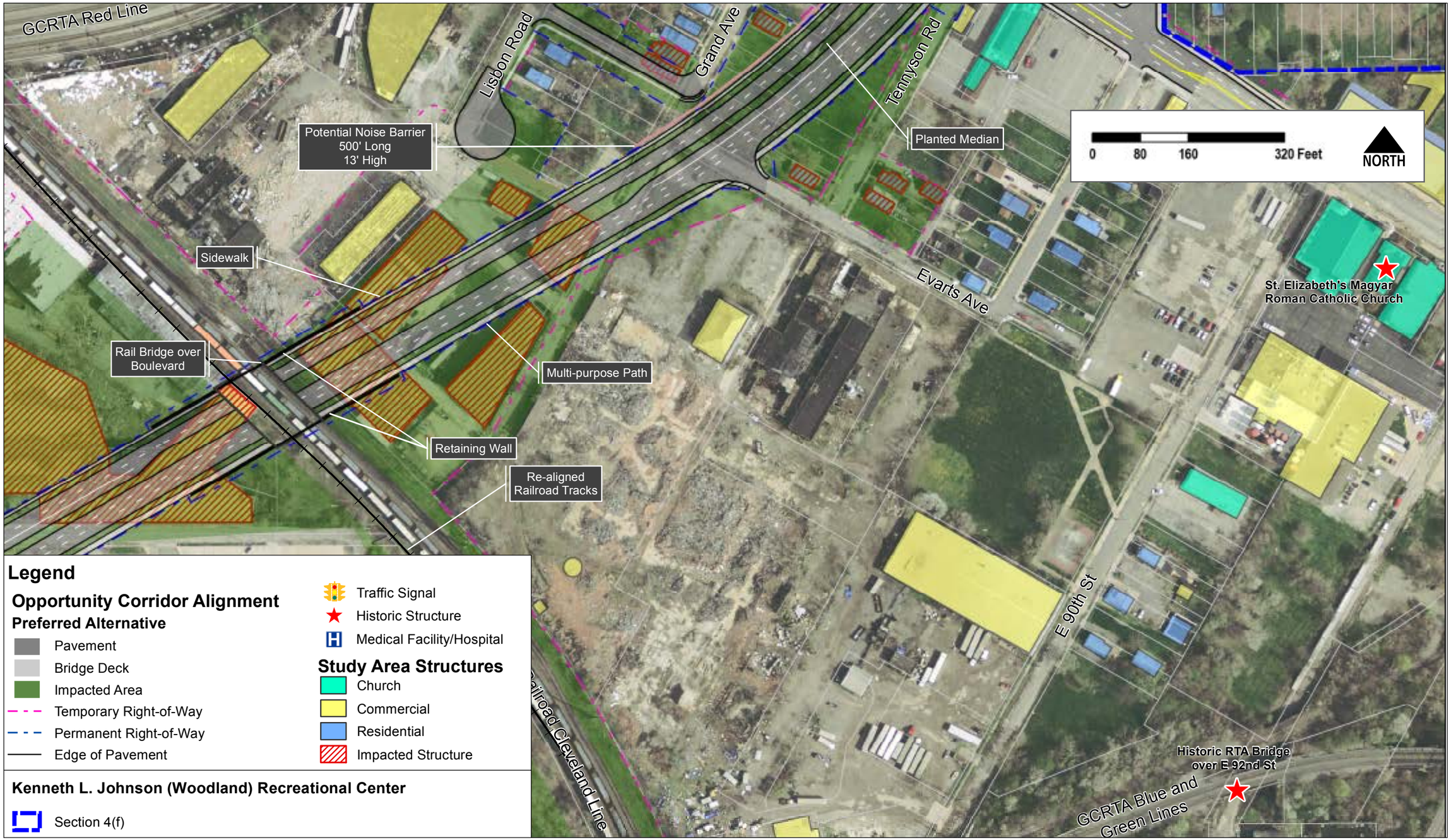


Figure 4-15: Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Project Preferred Alternative Plan / Map 6 of 10

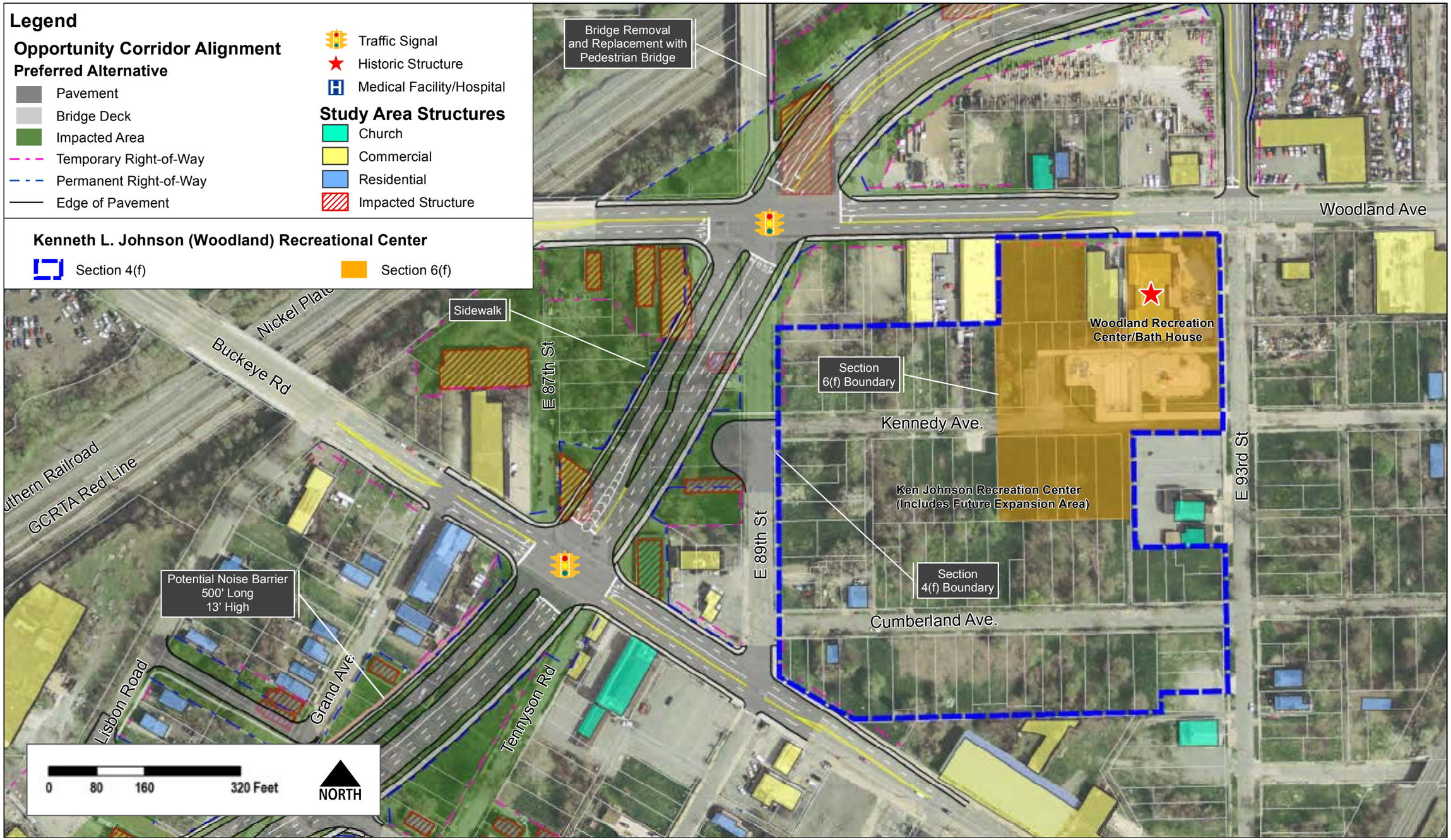


Figure 4-16: Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Project Preferred Alternative Plan / Map 7 of 10

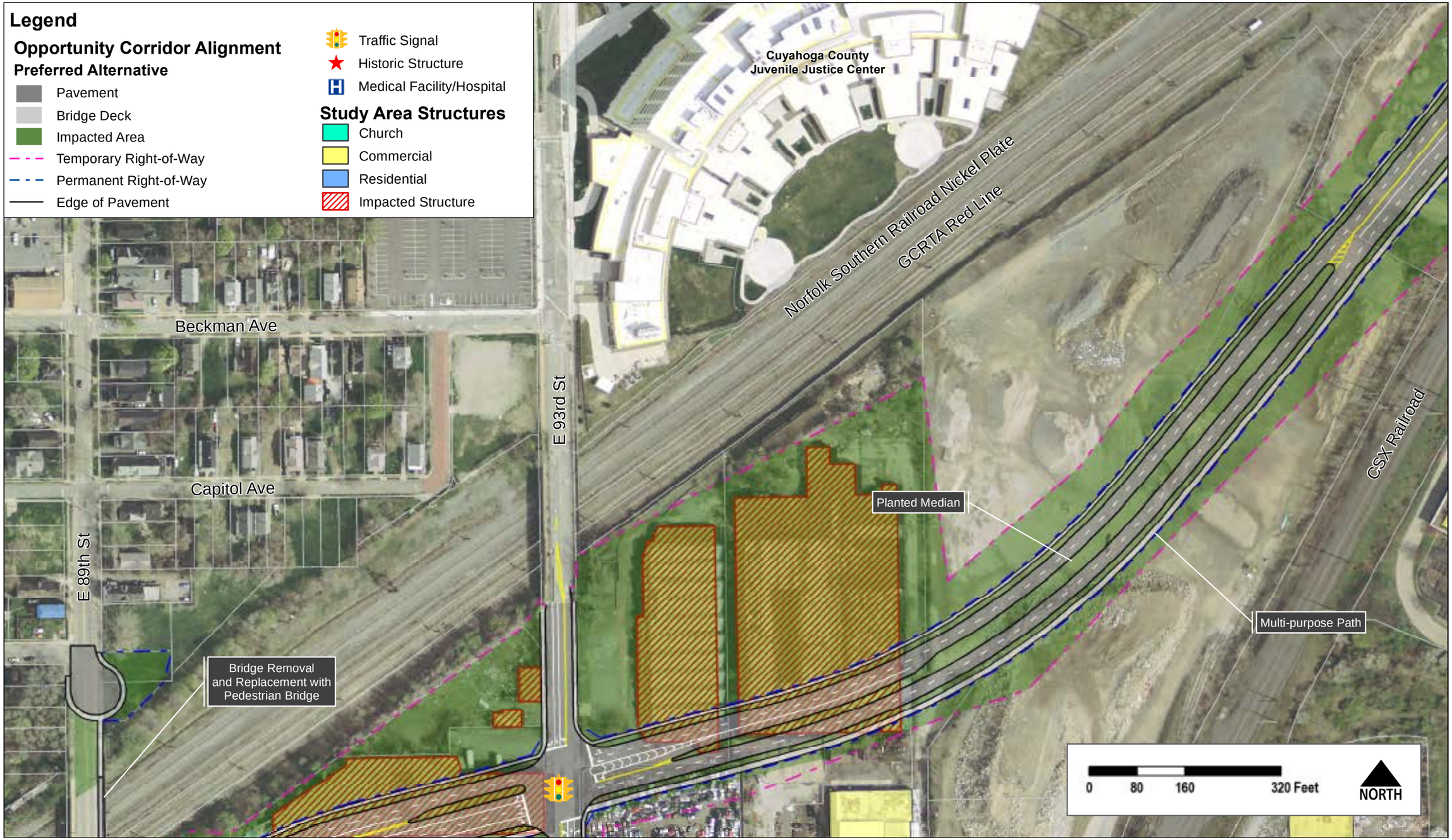


Figure 4-17: Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Project Preferred Alternative Plan / Map 8 of 10

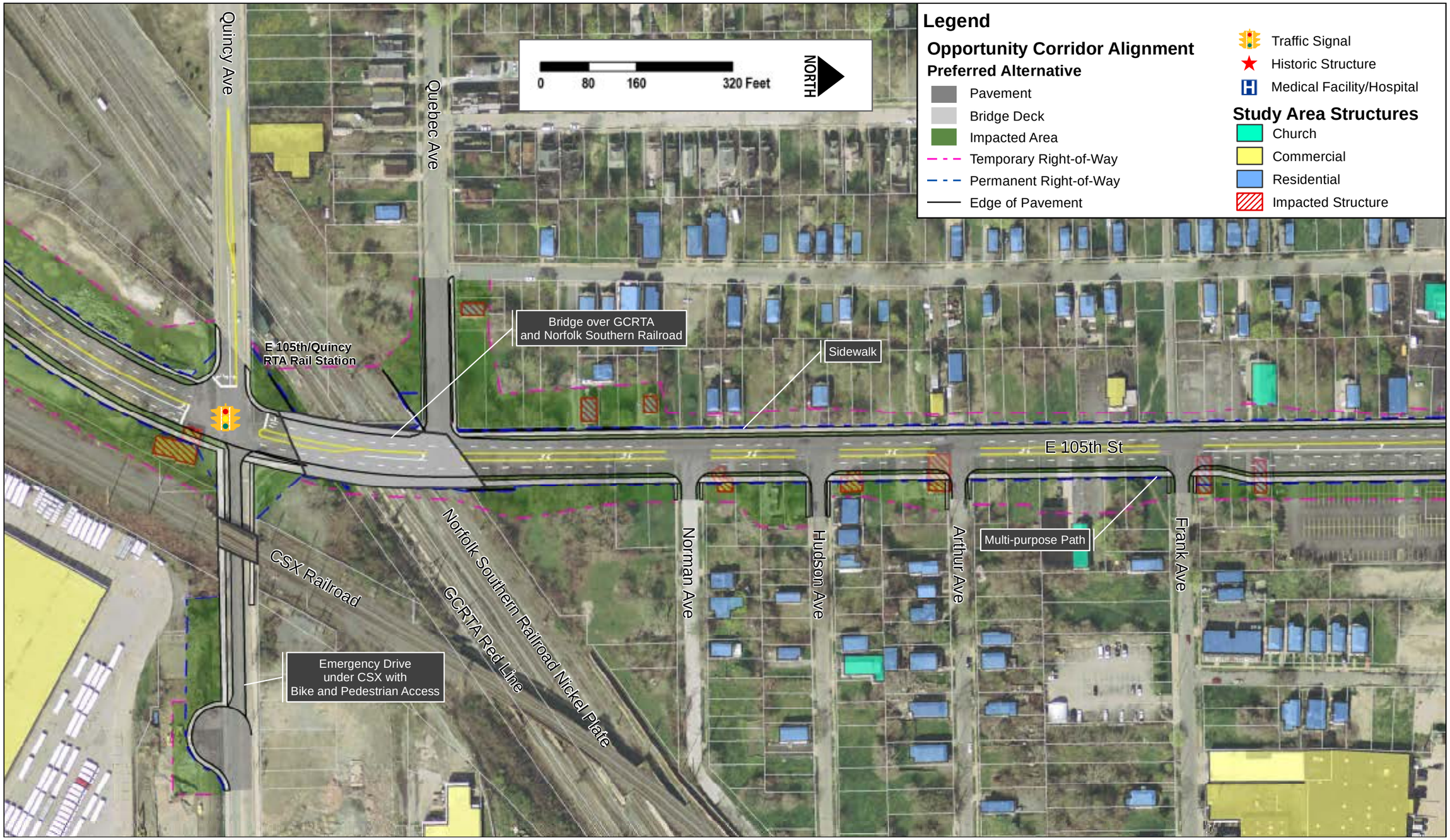


Figure 4-18: Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Project Preferred Alternative Plan / Map 9 of 10

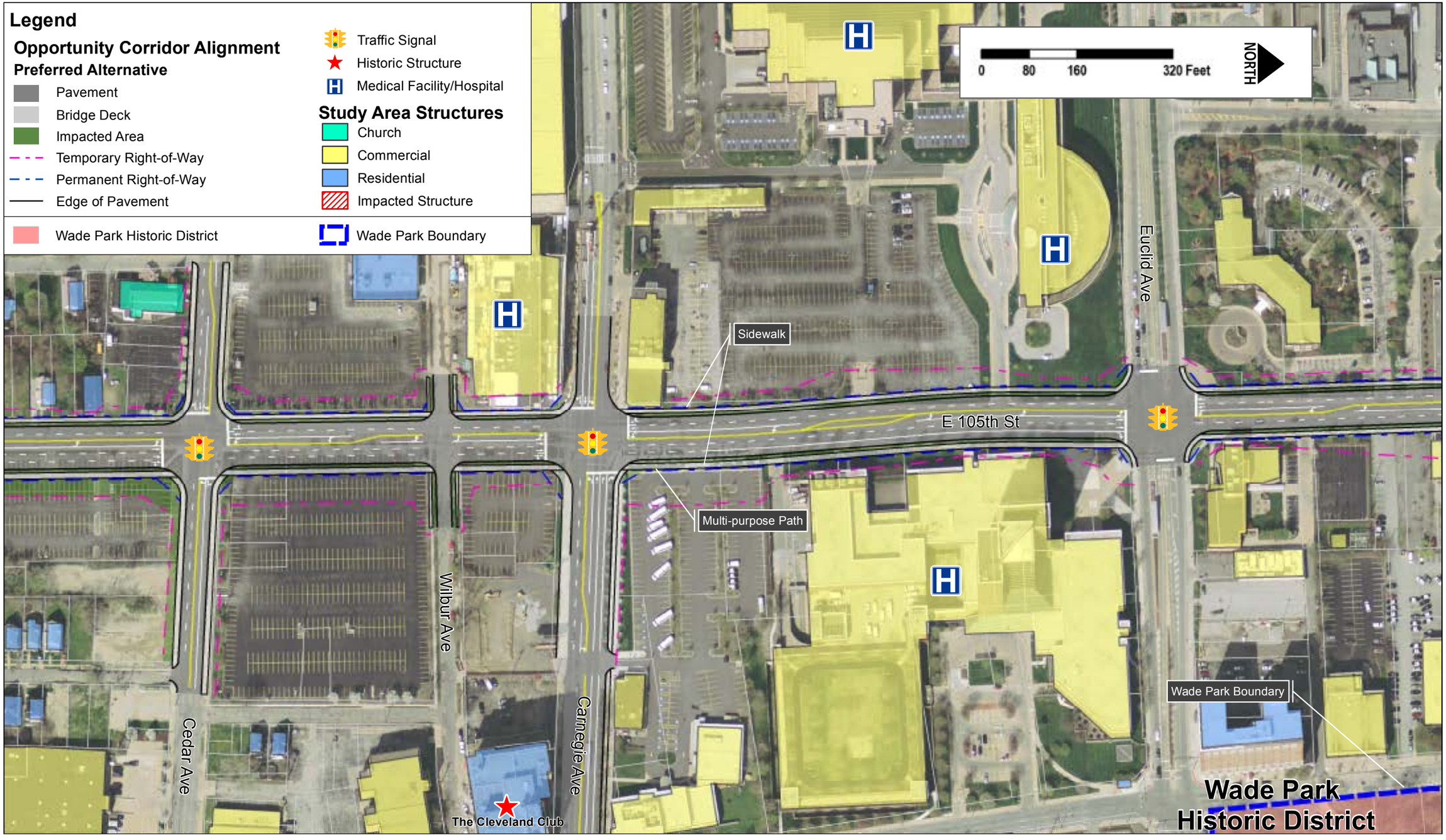
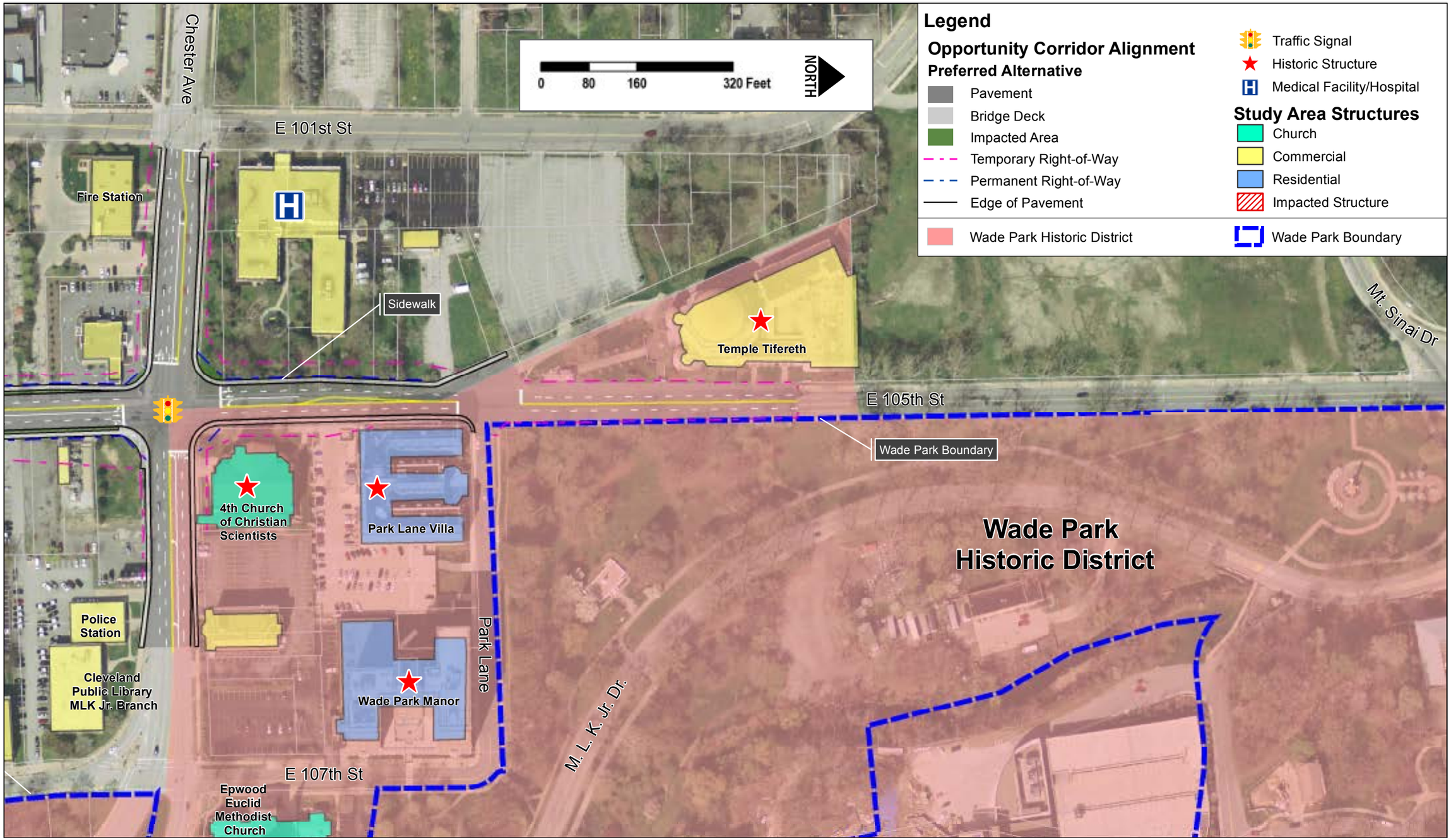


Figure 4-19: Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Project Preferred Alternative Plan / Map 10 of 10



Further information about available replacement housing and commercial business space is in the *Opportunity Corridor Relocation Assistance Program (RAP) Survey* (September 2012).

Input received during public meetings suggested that residents are concerned about the cost of moving. The purchase of private property and cost of moving residents, businesses and churches to build the project would be regulated by state and federal laws, including the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act (Uniform Act). These laws provide for the fair and equal treatment of all persons affected by the project. These laws include several specific measures to address the financial concerns identified by residents.

Landowners whose property is needed to build the project would be invited to participate in the public hearing on the DEIS. The process of actually buying land would not begin until after the Record of Decision (ROD). As part of the property-buying process, a relocation agent would help everyone required to move because of the project. The agent helps with finding replacement housing, contacting lending agencies and moving companies, processing claims for payment and processing appeals.

The No-Build Alternative would not require any homes, businesses or churches to be relocated.

HOW WOULD STUDY AREA NEIGHBORHOODS BE AFFECTED?

When planning a project, it is important to consider the interactions among people within study area neighborhoods. These interactions are collectively called "community cohesion," which is an important part of a strong, vibrant and safe community. Community cohesion factors include how residents know and interact with their neighbors, and the level of participation in community-based activities within a neighborhood.

Neighborhoods within the study area have seen businesses close or relocate over the past several decades. Job opportunities and the population have also decreased. The relatively high number of vacant parcels has changed areas that were large neighborhoods into areas with high numbers of isolated residences (Figure 4-20). Recognizing these trends, the City of Cleveland has increased its efforts to encourage economic development and investment in the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor study area. The City's efforts are expected to help revive and renew the southeast Cleveland area and improve community cohesion. The No-Build Alternative would not support these efforts. It also would not improve local traffic movements, access and connections.

Although community cohesion has been impacted over time, residential and business relocations from the Opportunity Corridor project could result in additional impacts. Mitigation for these potential impacts is discussed on pages 4-28 through 4-30. Furthermore, the City of Cleveland – working with the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) – has identified the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project as an important project to support its revival

▲ *Figure 4-20: The increase in vacant parcels has changed previously strong communities into areas with high numbers of isolated residences.*

▲ *Figure 4-21: The City of Cleveland has identified the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project as an important project to support its revival and renewal efforts.*

and renewal efforts (Figure 4-21). Therefore, the project could ultimately help improve community cohesion.

The No-Build Alternative would have no effect on community cohesion.

HOW WOULD BICYCLES AND PEDESTRIANS BE AFFECTED?

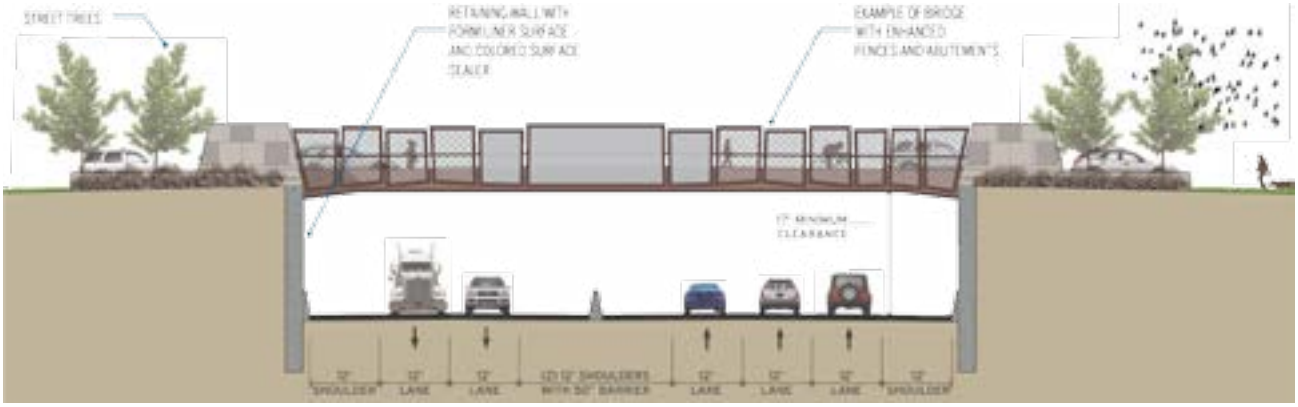
The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project would improve overall bicycle and pedestrian connections, access and safety by building features for these users.

More specifically, the project would include a 10-foot bicycle and pedestrian path on the south side of the roadway, and a 6-foot sidewalk on the north side of the roadway (Figure 4-22, pages 4-20 and 4-21). The proposed bicycle and pedestrian path would improve the City's bikeway network. It would also improve connections between existing bikeways located at East 55th Street, East 79th Street, Quincy Avenue, and Chester Avenue, as well as the Euclid Avenue Corridor bike lanes. The project would also improve bicycle and pedestrian movements that are currently blocked by the Kingsbury Run Valley and the Norfolk Southern Railway (NS) Cleveland Main Line. In some areas, roadway users would have to cross a new urban boulevard to travel within the study area; however, the design includes proper pedestrian and bicycle crossings to help users safely make these movements.

The project would close the East 89th Street Bridge over the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA) Red Line. Other routes for cyclists and pedestrians crossing the Red Line are available on East 86th Street and East 93rd Street. However, using these routes would require residents who live close to the East 89th Street Bridge to travel up to 1,500 feet farther. Also, the proposed roadway bridge at East 55th Street would increase the trip to the East 55th Street transit station from the area near the St. Hyacinth neighborhood by up to 1,000 feet. Mitigation for these impacts is discussed on pages 4-28 through 4-30.

Figure 4-22: Proposed Boulevard Section Views

▼ East 55th Street Bridge (Looking East)



▼ Typical Boulevard at Side Street Intersection

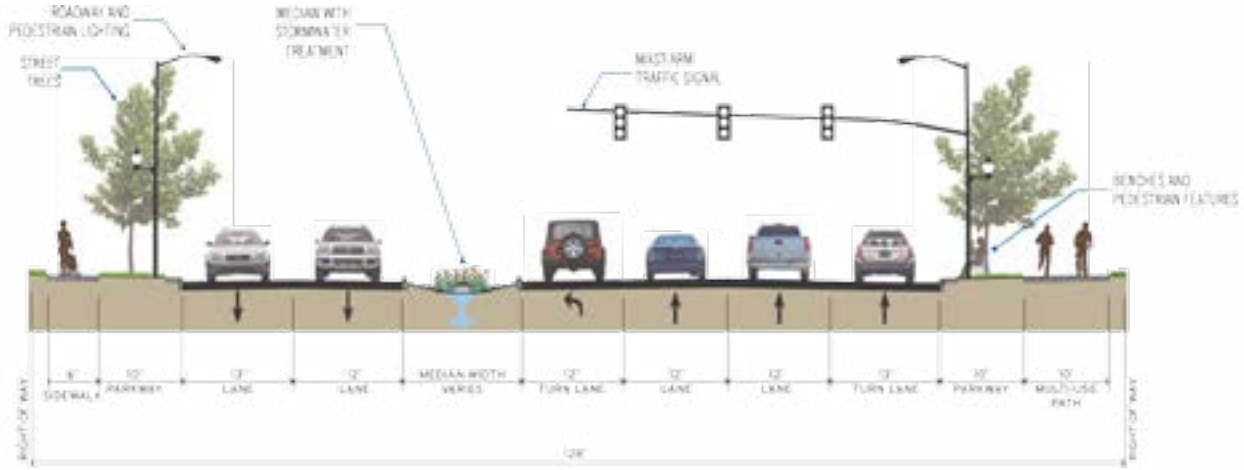
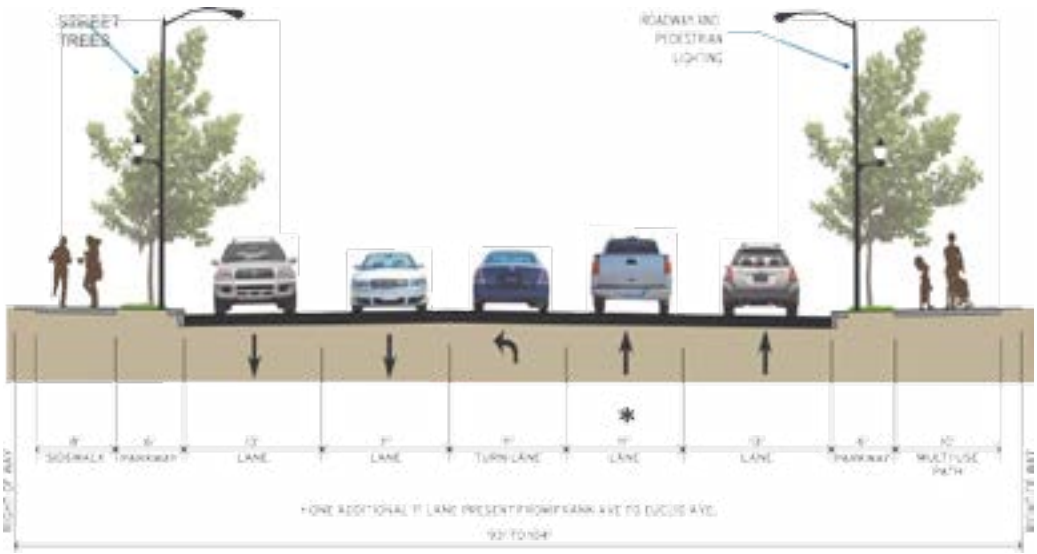


Figure 4-22: Proposed Boulevard Section Views, *continued*

▼ **Typical Boulevard (Looking East)**

▼ **East 105th Street (Looking North)**



The No-Build Alternative would have no effect on bicycle and pedestrian connections, access and safety.

HOW WOULD EXISTING ROADS AND ACCESS POINTS BE CHANGED?

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project would require changes to the local street network, one of the biggest being the I-490-East 55th Street intersection. In this area, I-490 would be lowered, and a new bridge would be built on East 55th Street. Access to and from East 55th Street would be provided by the new "quadrant roadway." The quadrant roadway is a short new roadway that would be built near East 59th Street to route traffic between East 55th Street and the proposed boulevard (Figure 3-2, page 3-3).

The urban boulevard would also include new traffic lights at Kinsman Road, East 75th Street, East 79th Street, Buckeye Road, Woodland Avenue, East 93rd Street, Quincy Avenue. Traffic lights on East 105th Street north of Quincy Avenue would remain, including those at Cedar, Carnegie, Euclid and Chester avenues.

Most of the remaining changes to the existing streets would occur on low-volume neighborhood streets. These changes (see Figures 4-10 through 4-19, pages 4-8 through 4-17) include:

- Francis Avenue – closure between East 55th Street and East 57th Street;
- Berwick Road – cul-de-sac;
- Colfax Road – cul-de-sac;
- East 73rd Street – cul-de-sac;
- Rawlings Avenue – cul-de-sac and closure between East 75th Street and East 79th Street;
- Lisbon Road – cul-de-sac and connection with Grand Avenue near Evarts Road;
- Tennyson Road – closure between Evarts and Buckeye roads;
- East 87th Street – closure between Buckeye Road and Woodland Avenue;
- East 89th Street – closure between Woodland and Nevada avenues; and
- Quincy Avenue – closure between East 105th Street and Woodhill Road.

In each of the areas, the project would provide access to homes and businesses. Additionally, as requested by the City of Cleveland, access for bicycles, pedestrians and emergency service providers would remain on Quincy Avenue. These features would minimize impacts as much as possible; as a result, overall impacts would be minor.

The No-Build Alternative would keep existing roadway connections between I-77 and the University Circle area, but it would not improve these connections. It would also not improve the mobility or levels of service for traffic traveling to, from and within the area between I-77 and University Circle.

THE GOALS OF THE PROJECT INCLUDE IMPROVING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION CONNECTIONS AND IMPROVING FACILITIES FOR PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS.

HOW WOULD THE EXISTING ROADWAY NETWORK BE AFFECTED?

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project would improve regional travel by providing a direct connection between I-77/I-490 and University Circle. Local travel would also be improved through new connections (intersections) among the roads, neighborhoods, and businesses in the study area.

For instance, the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor would provide a way for traffic to travel across human-made and natural

features that currently serve as barriers, including the Kingsbury Run Valley, the GCRTA Blue/Green rapid transit line, and the NS Cleveland Mainline.

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor would also help the existing roadway network to better handle traffic volumes. For example, when the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor is built, traffic on several neighboring roadways and intersections is expected to shift to the new boulevard. With less traffic, these other roadways and intersections will operate better.

For additional details about the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor's effects on the transportation network, please refer to the *Opportunity Corridor Certified Traffic Plates* (June 2012) and the *Opportunity Corridor Operational Analysis Technical Memorandum* (May 2012, revised June 2012). These reports are included on the CD included with this DEIS.

HOW WOULD PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION BE AFFECTED?

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project would benefit public transportation. In fact, one of the goals of the project is to provide better connections to public transportation, including existing GCRTA stations (Figure 4-23). The project would also improve the vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian connections to existing facilities such as the East 55th Street and East 79th Street rapid transit stations and existing bus stops. It would also provide the infrastructure needed to support the city's redevelopment plans, which would increase use of the existing public transportation system over the long-term.

▲ *Figure 4-23: The project would provide the infrastructure to support the city's plans to increase use of the existing public transportation system over the long-term.*

The No-Build Alternative would not affect public transportation outside of the GCRTA's current plans.

WOULD COMMUNITY OR PUBLIC SERVICES BE AFFECTED?

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project would require the relocation of Greater Roman Baptist Church, 8709 Buckeye Road. As mentioned previously, the RAP survey completed for the project determined that there are feasible relocation sites both within and near the study area. So the church could choose to move to another location within the study area. This would help to minimize any impacts.

The project would close Quincy Avenue between East 105th Street and Woodhill Road. However, access for emergency response providers would be maintained. No other impacts to community or public services are expected as a result of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project. In fact, the new boulevard would improve access for emergency responders. It could also make it easier for residents within and beyond the study area to access public places such as parks, schools and libraries.

The No-Build Alternative would have no effect on community or public services.

HOW WOULD TRAFFIC NOISE LEVELS CHANGE?

Traffic noise is unwanted sound created by moving cars and trucks. The level of traffic noise depends on three things:

1. Traffic volumes – roads with more vehicles are generally louder;

2. Traffic speeds – traffic is louder at higher speeds; and

3. Percent of heavy trucks (e.g., semi-trucks) on the road.

Existing traffic noise levels would increase in some areas as a result of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project. To determine how much noise levels would increase, a detailed traffic noise study was completed. The purpose of this study was to predict future traffic noise levels, determine where impacts would occur, and identify ways to mitigate impacts.

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project is predicted to have traffic noise impacts at 24 general locations. Ways to mitigate or reduce these impacts were considered at each location, as several factors play into whether mitigation would work for any given spot. For example, mitigation must reduce traffic noise by a certain amount, and engineering requirements must also be met so that no site conditions would make mitigation difficult or impossible to build. Other factors, such as cost-effectiveness, are also evaluated.

Considering these factors, the noise study determined that noise walls would be the only option to mitigate the traffic noise impacts in the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor study area. Noise walls are solid obstructions built between the roadway and the homes along it. Noise walls do not completely block all noise; however, they reduce overall noise levels

▲ *Figure 4-24: Noise walls, such as the one in this photo, reduce overall noise levels. If noise walls are desired, the affected people would help decide how the walls would look on their side of the wall.*

(Figure 4-24). Table 4-3 shows the three areas where noise would be mitigated by noise walls based on the noise study.

Whenever it is determined that noise walls would mitigate increased traffic noise, it does not mean that they will actually be built. According to ODOT's policy, ODOT will gather input from residents and property owners who would be affected by the noise walls. ODOT will decide whether to build the noise walls based on the desires of the affected people. If noise walls are desired, the people who are affected would help decide how the walls would look on their side of the wall.

This public involvement effort and the final decision about whether to build the noise walls

Table 4-3: Possible Noise Wall Locations and Sizes

LOCATION IN STUDY AREA	APPROX. LENGTH (FT.)	HEIGHT RANGE (FT.)
South side of boulevard between 71st Street and 75th Street (Figure 4-13, page 4-11)	610	11-14
North side of boulevard between GCRTA Blue-Green Line and 75th Street (Figure 4-13, page 4-11)	540	13
North side of boulevard between Evart Avenue and Buckeye Road (Figure 4-15, page 4-13)	500	13

would not be made until the project is in its final design stage. The public involvement outreach for the noise walls should not be confused with the public hearing for this DEIS, as they occur at different times in the project's development.

On Dec. 20, 2012, ODOT accepted the results of the traffic noise study for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project. A copy of the ODOT interoffice communication about its acceptance of the noise study is on the CD included with this DEIS. Additional details about the noise study are contained in the *Opportunity Corridor Noise Analysis Report* (December 2012), which can also be found on the CD included with this DEIS.

Over time, the volume of traffic on local roadways will change, even if the project is not built. The changes in traffic volumes will cause existing traffic noise levels to change as well. Despite these changes, no traffic noise impacts are expected with the No-Build Alternative.

WOULD AIR QUALITY BE AFFECTED?

The Clean Air Act (CAA) was established by the federal government to ensure that transportation projects meet national air quality standards. The primary purpose of the CAA is to protect public health and welfare by improving air quality. Many air quality issues are evaluated at the regional level. In the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor study area, regional air quality evaluations are completed by the local Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA), which is given this responsibility by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA). The NOACA air quality evaluation considers regional air pollutants such as ozone.

Ozone is found near the earth's surface, where pollutants emitted from society's activities react in the presence of sunlight to form ozone. Hot sunny weather with stagnant wind conditions favors ozone formation. Cuyahoga County does not currently meet national air quality standards for ozone, also called "nonattainment." However, because the Opportunity Corridor project is listed in NOACA's approved Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), ozone is addressed as part of that process.

NOACA is also responsible for developing a transportation plan to meet all federal air quality standards. The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project is part of NOACA's transportation plan, which meets all federal air quality standards. This means that the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project would not have an impact on regional air quality.

In addition to looking at air quality in the region, a study was also completed specifically for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor study area. The purpose of the study was to make sure no localized violations of the national air quality standards for carbon monoxide (CO) and particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) would occur as a result of the project. The results of this study are summarized below:

- CO is an odorless, colorless and toxic gas that comes directly from the tailpipes of cars and trucks. Power plants and factories also emit CO. Nearly two-thirds of the CO emissions in the United States come from transportation sources, including cars and trucks (Figure 4-25, page 4-26). The study found that the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project would not violate national CO air quality standards, which are established by EPA. The findings of the CO analysis were coordinated with OEPA. On Nov. 21, 2012, OEPA agreed that the project would not contribute to any violations of national air quality standards.

- $PM_{2.5}$ is a mixture of very small solid particles and liquid droplets found in the air. Some particles, such as dust, dirt, soot or smoke are large or dark enough to be seen with the naked eye. Others are so small they can only be seen with a microscope. $PM_{2.5}$ levels were looked at as part of the air quality study. Based on the study, the FHWA, EPA,

▲ *Figure 4-25: Nearly two-thirds of the nation's carbon monoxide emissions come from transportation sources, including cars and trucks.*

ODOT and OEPA have determined that the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project does not present concern for air quality. Therefore, the project meets all federal air quality requirements and standards for $PM_{2.5}$.

The air quality study also looked at air pollutants known as mobile source air toxics (MSATs), which come from human sources including on-road moving sources (cars and trucks); non-road moving sources (airplanes); area sources (dry-cleaning businesses); and non-moving sources (factories or refineries). No national air quality standards exist for MSATs.

The air quality study found that the project may increase MSAT emissions in some locations, likely along the new roadway sections that would be built between East 55th Street and Quincy Avenue, as well as along East 105th Street between Quincy Avenue and Chester Avenue. However, overall, MSAT emissions within the study area are expected to decrease in the future because EPA-required vehicle and fuel regulations will begin to take effect.

The project meets the criteria for "Low Potential for MSAT effects" in accordance with the *FHWA Interim Guidance on Air Toxics Analysis in NEPA Documents.* On Dec. 4, 2012, OEPA agreed with the conclusion that the Opportunity Corridor project has low potential for MSAT effects. A copy of the OEPA interoffice communication is on the CD included with this DEIS.

For additional details about the air quality study for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project, please refer to the *Opportunity Corridor CO Hot-Spot (Microscale) Analysis Report* (November 2012) and the *Opportunity Corridor Qualitative Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSAT) Analysis Report* (November 2012). These reports are on the CD included with this DEIS.

The No-Build Alternative is not considered as part the NOACA transportation plan, so it is not possible to say how that alternative would affect regional air quality. The No-Build Alternative would not lead to any localized violations of national air quality standards. Additionally, due to the implementation of EPA's vehicle and fuel regulations, the overall MSAT emissions in the study area would be expected to decrease in the future with the No-Build Alternative.

AS THE DESIGN OF THE PROJECT PROGRESSES, VISUAL ELEMENTS SUCH AS LANDSCAPING AND LIGHTING WOULD CONTINUE TO BE COORDINATED WITH THE PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS.

HOW WOULD THE PROJECT VISUALLY AFFECT NEIGHBORHOODS?

The project would impact the visual nature of the area by building a roadway and associated features where none now exist; however, the project is using a context sensitive solutions (CSS) design process to coordinate the roadway design with the interests and concerns of the community.

As part of the CSS process, ODOT has completed extensive coordination with residents, business owners and the general public. As a result, several features have been included in the design to minimize impacts and improve the look of the study area. These features include mast-arm traffic signal supports; combined street and pedestrian lighting; grass tree lawns (parkways); street trees; grassy roadway median with stormwater treatment measures; retaining walls and bridge abutments with form-liner surfaces and colored surface sealer; and designated locations for streetscape amenities such as benches, trash receptacles and bike racks. Figure 4-22 on pages 4-20 and 4-21 shows the typical boulevard cross-sections, including the CSS design features that have been incorporated into the design.

As the design of the project progresses, visual elements such as landscaping and lighting would continue to be coordinated with the project stakeholders. Public input would be collected during final design to help determine the details of any noise walls built as part of the project. Additionally, the project would meet the requirements of the City of Cleveland's *Streetscape Design Guidelines Handbook*. These measures would ensure that the project is built in a way that visually complements the area to the greatest extent possible.

The No-Build Alternative is not expected to change the visual landscape of existing neighborhoods.

WOULD LOW-INCOME AND MINORITY POPULATIONS BE AFFECTED?

In 1994, concern about low-income and minority populations bearing an unequal share of adverse health and environmental effects led President Bill Clinton to issue Executive Order 12898, focusing federal agency attention on environmental justice issues. In response, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) and FHWA developed a process to ensure that environmental justice was factored into all transportation-related decisions,

The three basic environmental justice principles are the following:

- To determine if a project has disproportionately high and adverse effects – or unequally negative impacts – on minority and low-income populations. This includes finding ways to avoid, minimize and mitigate these effects.

- To allow communities that could be affected by a project to have full and fair participation in the planning process. This includes allowing people to have access to information and input into the decisions that are made.

- To ensure that minority and low-income groups receive the same benefits from a project, including that benefits are not denied, reduced or significantly delayed for these populations.

As shown in Figure 4-26 on Page 4-28, the percentage of low-income populations in almost all of the study area neighborhoods is bigger than city, county or state averages. The percentage of minority residents in four of the six study area neighborhoods is also much bigger than the city, county or state averages (Figure 4-27, page 4-29). As a result, any project in the study area – including the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project – would mostly affect low-income and minority populations.

Benefits expected to result from the proposed project include the following:

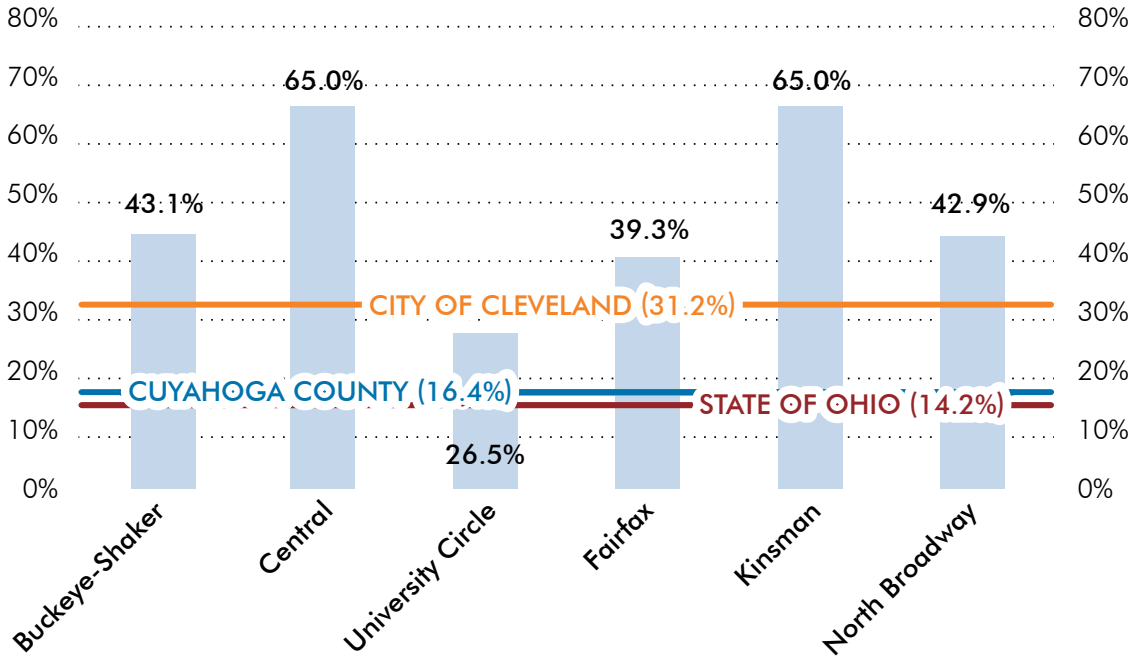
- Improved access to the Interstate system and a major employment center (University Circle);

- Increased mobility and local access for all transportation system users;

- Increased pedestrian and bicycle access, connectivity and safety;

- Potential for increased local employment opportunities resulting from planned complementary development as part of the City of Cleveland's revitalization strategy;

Figure 4-26: 2010 Percent Persons Below Federal Poverty Level by Study Area Neighborhood



Source: State, county, and city data based U.S. Census Bureau (Factfinder Quickfacts accessed on Aug. 13, 2012) Neighborhood data based on 2006-2010 American Community Survey (Block Group data downloaded Aug. 10, 2012).

- Potential for enhanced community cohesion through complementary infill development and redevelopment;
- Improved visual environment by including mast-arm traffic signal supports; combined street and pedestrian lighting; grass tree lawns, or parkways; street trees; a landscaped roadway median with stormwater treatment measures; retaining walls and bridge abutments with form-liner surfaces and colored surface sealer; and design locations for streetscape elements such as benches, trash receptacles and bike racks;
- Improved safety resulting from upgrades to the existing local streets at proposed intersections; the construction of dedicated bicycle and pedestrian facilities; improved levels of service at congested intersections; as well as an increased traffic- and pedestrian-generated human presence.

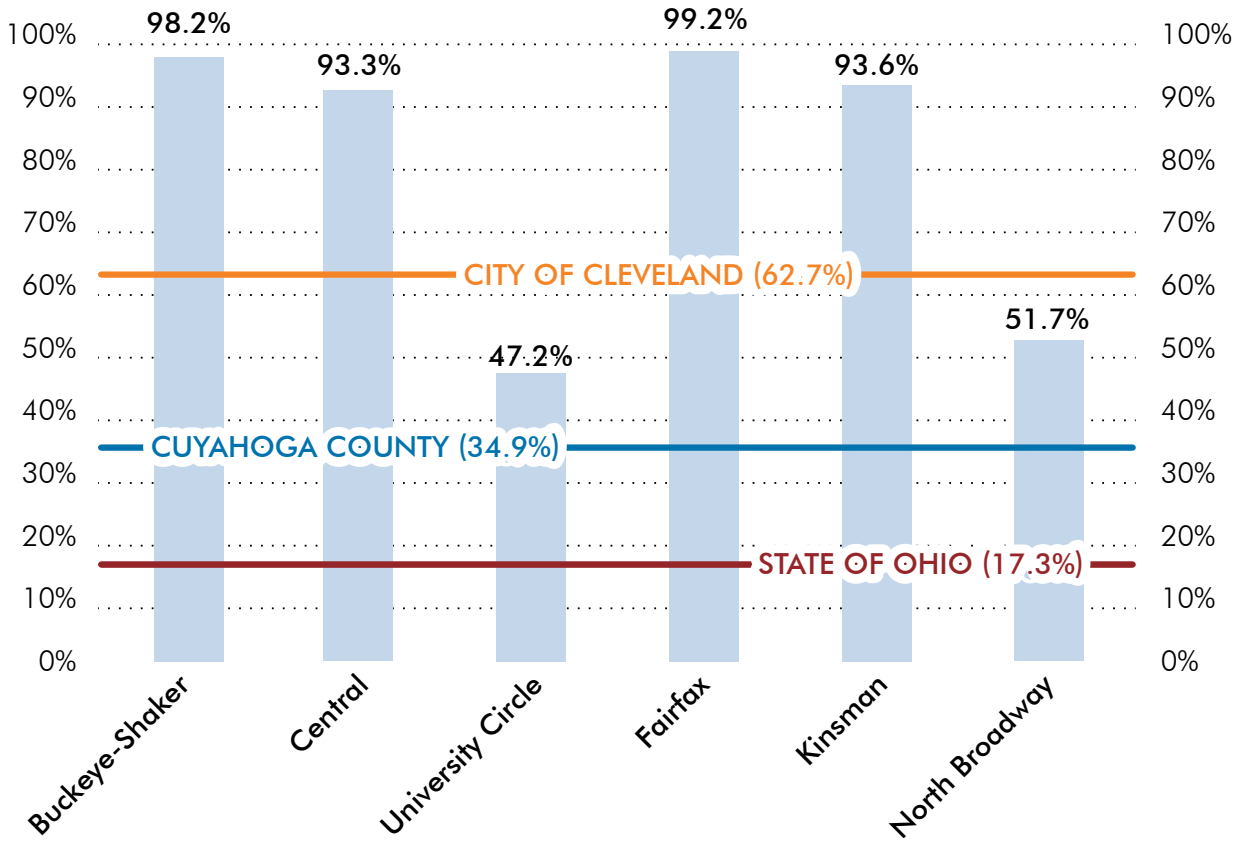
Despite the benefits expected to result from the project, low-income and minority populations will be affected more than other populations. Because of this, the project was found to have a disproportionately high and adverse effect to low-income and minority populations.[4]

As a result of this finding, several measures will be implemented as part of the project to mitigate impacts and provide added benefits to the local community. These measures include the following:

- ODOT will build two pedestrian/bike bridges: one at East 59th Street and one at East 89th Street.

[4] *Because the impacts will affect low-income and minority populations more than others, they are considered disproportionately high and adverse according to Executive Order 12898, which governs federal agencies in how to treat environmental justice issues.*

Figure 4-27: 2010 Percent Minority Population by Study Area Neighborhood



Source: State, county, and city data based U.S. Census Bureau (Factfinder Quickfacts accessed on Aug. 13, 2012) Neighborhood data based on 2006-2010 American Community Survey (Block Group data downloaded Aug. 10, 2012).

- ODOT will implement a voluntary residential relocation program. This program will allow some residents whose homes are not directly impacted by the project to apply for assistance to relocate to another area.

- The Kenneth L. Johnson (Woodland) Recreational Center (Figure 4-28, page 4-30) is an important community resource to area residents. The city currently has plans to expand the rec center, and ODOT will fund $500,000 of the planned expansion.

- For required relocations, ODOT will work to provide replacement housing that has similar access to public transit, as long as those options are currently available in the housing market. Also, ODOT will make all reasonable efforts to relocate residents within the same neighborhood, if that is what they desire. This will mitigate potential impacts to community cohesion.

- Noise walls are recommended in three specific areas to mitigate predicted traffic noise impacts. ODOT will gather input from residents and property owners who would be affected by the noise walls. ODOT will decide whether to build the noise walls based on the desires of the affected people. If noise walls are desired, the people who are affected would help decide how the walls would look on their side of the wall.

ODOT will present other possible mitigation and enhancement measures during the DEIS review period and at the public hearing. Based on the comments received, additional

▲ *Figure 4-28: The Kenneth L. Johnson (Woodland) Recreation Center on Woodland Avenue.*

measures may be incorporated into the project. No final decisions have been made, but other measures could include:

- Job training assistance – ODOT could provide funding to help existing job training programs. These programs could partner with local labor unions to promote job training in the construction industry.

- Noise barrier enhancements – ODOT could provide enhanced noise barriers. This could include using transparent materials to increase visibility, as well as other alternative materials to improve the look of the barriers.

- Urban agriculture preserve – ODOT could provide financial aid to assist in the planning and development of sites previously identified as part of the Urban Agricultural Innovation Zone, which is located in the Kinsman neighborhood.

- St. Hyacinth neighborhood entrance – The closure of Francis Avenue at East 55th Street will affect the current entrance into the St. Hyacinth neighborhood. To help create a new entrance, ODOT could construct enhancements along Maurice and Bellford avenues. These measures could include street trees, and sidewalk and pavement repairs or improvements.

- ODOT could consider increasing the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) construction goal of 15 percent share in the construction contract(s).

- Enhanced bus shelters – ODOT could help construct enhanced bus shelters in areas where the existing bus lines will cross the new boulevard. This could include Kinsman Road, East 79th Street, Buckeye Road, and Quincy and Cedar avenues.

Please refer to the *Opportunity Corridor Environmental Justice Technical Memorandum* (April 2013) for more details about the

Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project's potential impacts to and benefits for low-income and minority populations. This report is on the CD included with this DEIS.

The No-Build Alternative would include minor, short-term, routine safety and maintenance efforts, and some planned major projects. The potential impacts from these activities would be less severe in most cases than the impacts from the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project; however, the need for a better transportation system would not be met.

For example, the No-Build Alternative would not address the lack of access and mobility between the Interstates and University Circle. This has contributed over time to the steady decline in population and job opportunities within the study area.

The No-Build Alternative also would not provide the necessary transportation infrastructure to support redevelopment and renewal of the area.

HOW WOULD PARKS AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BE AFFECTED?

Portions of the Kenneth L. Johnson (Woodland) Recreation Center, 9206 Woodland Ave., were built using federal money from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act. Therefore, the rec center, which is located in the study area, is protected under Section 6(f) of the LWCF Act. The act requires that any property using LWCF money be kept and used for public outdoor recreation unless approved by the National Park Service (NPS).

The boundary of the Section 6(f) property is shown in Figure 4-15 on page 4-13. The project would require about 0.05 acres of land from the rec center property. This land would be needed for less than six months for the grading and seeding that would take place when Woodland Avenue is widened in the area of the new boulevard. Because this is a temporary situation, no permanent impacts to Section 6(f) resources are anticipated.

On June 13, 2012, ODOT coordinated the impacts with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR). The ODNR manages the LWCF program in the state of Ohio for the NPS. ODNR and NPS responded that the construction time frame is too far in the future to provide an approval of the temporary non-conforming use. A copy of the Section 6(f) coordination documents, including coordination between ODOT and ODNR, are on the CD included with this DEIS.

During final design, the project sponsor will coordinate with NPS through ODOT and ODNR for any anticipated Section 6(f) impacts. This coordination would occur approximately one to two years before the plans are finalized.

Because the rec center is a publicly owned facility, it is also protected under Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966.

Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966 commonly called "Section 4(f),"states that a project using federal money cannot use land from publicly owned parks or recreational areas unless the following conditions apply:

- There is no feasible (possible) and prudent (sensible) alternative to the use of the land; and
- The action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property.

An important detail about Section 4(f) is that, unlike Section 6(f) (discussed above), it protects not only current recreation properties, but also any approved new or expanded areas. According to the *Kenneth L. Johnson Recreation Center Master Plan* dated November 2004, the City of Cleveland is planning to expand the rec center. The changes would include additional indoor and outdoor facilities in the area between East 89th Street, Woodland Avenue, East 93rd Street and Buckeye Avenue. The total area of the rec center property after the

Table 4-4: Temporary Impacts to Current and Planned Expansion Areas of Kenneth L. Johnson Recreation Center

TOTAL AREA (ACRES)	TEMPORARY EASEMENT LOCATION	TOTAL PARCELS IMPACTED	IMPACT AREA (ACRES)
11.6	Buckeye Rd	5	0.07
	Woodland Ave	4	0.06
	New Boulevard	4	0.06
Total		**13**	**0.19**

Note: The impacts listed in this table differ from the Section 6(f) impacts previously discussed because impacts to planned expansion areas are included.

planned expansion would be approximately 11.6 acres, see Figure 4-15 on page 4-13.

During construction, the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project would need about 0.19 acres (8,420 square feet) of land from the planned park expansion area (Table 4-4). The land would only be needed on a temporary basis for grading and seeding that would take place when Buckeye Road and Woodland Avenue are widened and when the new boulevard is built.

Specific requirements within Section 4(f) describe when a "use" of a resource occurs. The temporary impacts listed above would not result in a use of or impact to Section 4(f) resources. This finding was agreed to by the City of Cleveland on Sept. 24, 2012. ODOT determined that the project does not require Section 4(f) approval on Oct. 23, 2012.[5]

As part of this agreement, the following commitments would be included in the final design plans:

- The contractor is required to protect the rec center areas and users with warnings signs, gates, barricades, and/or fences during construction;
- Rec center access would be maintained at all times. The contractor would be required to coordinate the construction schedule with the City of Cleveland. Two weeks before construction starts, the contractor would notify the city, in writing, of the occupation dates;
- Any disturbed areas would be put back to a condition at least as good as or better than what existed before construction started;
- Staging and storage of construction equipment would not take place on the rec center property; and
- If unexpected work on the rec center property is needed, advance notice would be given to the City of Cleveland and ODOT to decide if additional coordination is needed.

A copy of the Section 4(f) coordination documents, including a copy of the coordination between ODOT and the City of Cleveland, are on the CD included with this DEIS.

The No-Build Alternative would have no direct effect on parks and recreational opportunities.

HOW WOULD CULTURAL RESOURCES BE AFFECTED?

Cultural resources include historic properties that are currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or that qualify for listing on the NHRP. Cultural resources can include districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects. They can be readily visible, or they can be below the ground – as is the case with archaeological resources.

Cultural resources are protected under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, which requires agencies to consider the effects of their actions on historic properties. Section 106

[5] *In accordance with 23 CFR 774 and the Programmatic Agreement for Processing of Non-Individual Section 4(f) Actions Between the Federal Highway Administration and the Ohio Department of Transportation (Agreement Number 17220), executed Aug. 24, 2012, ODOT Office of Environmental Services has determined that the project qualifies as an exception to the requirement for Section 4(f) approval.*

encourages but does not require the preservation of historic resources. Sometimes, there is no way for a project to be built without impacting historic resources. Historic resources are also protected under Section 4(f), just like parks and recreational properties. In Ohio, impacts to cultural resources are reviewed by the Ohio Historic Preservation Office (OHPO) of the Ohio Historical Society.

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project would impact the following properties that are listed on the NRHP:

- Kenneth L. Johnson (Woodland) Recreation Center (9206 Woodland Ave.) – About 0.05 acres would be needed on a short-term basis for grading and seeding during construction.

- Wade Park Historic District – About 0.12 acres would be needed on a short-term basis for grading and seeding during construction. This work would also occur on property for the 4th Church of Christian Scientists (10515 Chester Ave.) and Park Lane Villa (10510 Park Lane), which are contributing elements of the historic district.

Also, about 0.01 acres in the northeast corner of the East 105th Street-Chester Avenue intersection (Figure 4-29) would be used for the new boulevard and taken from the Wade Park Historic District and the 4th Church of Christian Scientists

This land, which is located in the southwest corner of the Historic District, is needed to meet current design standards. Chester Avenue is a federally designated truck route, so, at least one 12-foot lane must be provided in both directions. Currently, the widths of the travel lanes on Chester Avenue near East 105th Street range from 8 feet to 9 feet.

The project would also increase the area provided for turning vehicles in the northeast corner of the East 105th Street-Chester Avenue intersection, allowing westbound traffic to more easily make the turn to northbound East 105th Street. Currently, larger vehicles and trucks could drive over the curb and sidewalk because the turn is too tight, which also creates a safety concern for pedestrians. The project would increase the turning area

▲ *Figure 4-29: To meet current design standards, about 0.01 acres in the northeast corner of the East 105th Street-Chester Avenue intersection would be permanently taken from the historic district and used for the new Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project boulevard. (View looking north on East 105th Street.)*

▲ *Figure 4-30: The project would increase the turning area at the East 105th Street-Chester Avenue intersection, meeting current design standards and making it safer for pedestrians. (View looking east on Chester Avenue.)*

to meet current design standards and improve safety for pedestrians (Figure 4-30).

In a letter dated Nov. 29, 2012, FHWA – with ODOT as its agent[6] – determined that the temporary and permanent right of way required to build the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project would not adversely affect the historic integrity of the Kenneth L. Johnson Recreation Center or the Wade Park Historic District. The project also would have "no adverse effect" on the 4th Church of Christian Scientists or Park Lane Villa, which are contributing elements of the Wade Park Historic District.

In addition, based on the amount of ground disturbance across the entire project area, no further archaeological investigations were recommended. Based on these findings, ODOT stated that a Section 106 determination of "no adverse effect" is appropriate for the project. The OHPO concurred with this determination on Dec. 18, 2012.

As noted earlier, the proposed use of land within the Wade Park Historic District for permanent right of way is also regulated by Section 4(f). In its Nov. 29, 2012 letter, FHWA – with ODOT as its agent – notified the OHPO[7] of the intent to apply a *de minimis* Section 4(f)

A *DE MINIMIS* SECTION 4(F) FINDING IS A TYPE OF APPROVAL THAT CAN BE GIVEN WHEN THE IMPACTS TO A PROTECTED RESOURCE ARE MINOR. FOR HISTORIC SITES, THE PROJECT MUST HAVE "NO ADVERSE EFFECT" TO THE RESOURCE, AND THE OHPO MUST CONCUR WITH THIS FINDING.

[6] *In accordance with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's current regulations and 36 CFR § 800.5(b).*

[7] *In accordance with 23 CFR Part 774.*

finding[8] for the impacts to historic resources. FHWA concurred with the *de minimis* finding on Jan. 18, 2013.

For additional details about the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project's potential impacts on cultural resources, please refer to the *Phase I History/Architecture Survey Report for the Opportunity Corridor Project* (January 2010), the *Phase I Archaeological Literature Review, Prehistoric Context, and Archaeological Sensitivity Assessment for the Opportunity Corridor Project* (February 2010), and the *Phase I Archaeological Resource Review and Disturbance Assessment for the Proposed Opportunity Corridor Project* (November 2012). These reports, as well as the Section 106 and Section 4(f) coordination, are on the CD included with this DEIS.

The No-Build Alternative is not expected to impact historic resources.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE NOT PRESENT WITHIN THE STUDY AREA?

The following resources do *not* exist within the study area:

- Streams or surface water bodies;
- Wetlands;
- Aquatic habitat;
- Threatened and endangered species or habitat;
- Federally regulated floodplains;
- Farmland;
- Unique, rare or high-quality plant communities; or
- Drinking water resources.

Because they do not exist in the study area, these natural resources would not be impacted by either the No-Build Alternative or the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project.

Ohio EPA Division of Drinking and Groundwater Water maps were reviewed to identify drinking water resources located near the project area. The project is not located within a federally designated Sole Source Aquifer (SSA) or within any source water protection area for public water systems. Additionally, there are no community or non-community public water systems that use groundwater located near the project. The City of Cleveland has a public water supply system that obtains drinking water from Lake Erie. For additional details about drinking and groundwater resources, please refer to the Ohio EPA mapping on the CD included with this DEIS.

For additional details about the natural resources field studies and conclusions, please refer to the *Level 2 Ecological Survey Report for Opportunity Corridor* (PID 77333) (January 2010). This report is on the CD included with this DEIS. A copy of the correspondence from ODOT confirming that no further ecological coordination was required for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project is also on the CD.

HOW WOULD WATER QUALITY BE AFFECTED?

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project area is currently drained by a combined sewer system, in which a single sewer pipe carries both sanitary waste and stormwater flows (Figure 4-31, page 4-36). During dry weather, sanitary waste flows directly to a wastewater treatment plant; during wet weather, sanitary and stormwater combine and continue to flow to the wastewater treatment plant.

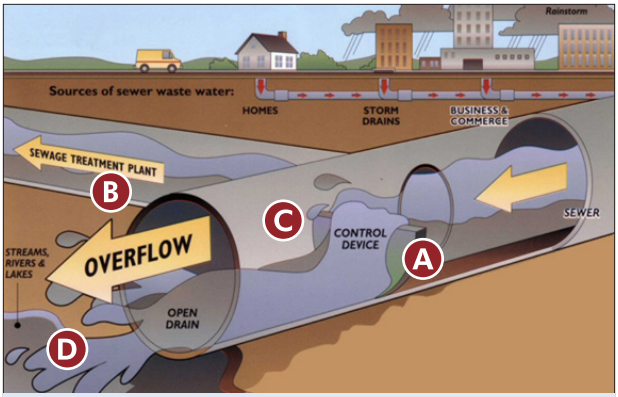
Extra flow is stored in the sewer pipes until the pipes fill. Once the pipes are full, they overflow to local waterways – allowing untreated wastewater to enter streams and rivers. In the project area, these include the Cuyahoga River, Lake Erie and Doan Brook. The Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORSD) has been ordered by EPA to reduce the number of combined sewer overflows.

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project would improve water quality by:

- Building depressed grassy areas in the boulevard median between East 55th Street

[8] *In accordance with 23 CFR 774.3 (b).*

Figure 4-31: How a Combined Sewer System Works



OVERFLOW POLLUTION

A) Normal flows from combined sewers are diverted by control devices …

B) … into an interceptor drain and on to the sewage treatment plant.

C) Stormwater runoff can create excessive water flows that overwhelm the control device …

D) … allowing untreated waste water into streams and rivers.

Source: www.maysville-online.com/lifestyles/article_e23ec5b6-c034-11df-b87c-001cc4c002e0.html

and Quincy Avenue that would store extra rain and snow and allow them to slowly seep into the ground. This helps reduce the volume of stormwater flowing to the combined sewer system by slowing it down and helping it drain over a longer period of time. The soil and grass in the depressed areas would also help filter some of the "pollution" in the water;

- Building a separate "storm-only" system to collect water runoff from the roadway, reducing the volume of combined sewer overflows; and

- Building a detention basin in the low-lying Kingsbury Run ravine between East 64th Street and Berwick Road (Figure 4-12, page 4-10). The basin would store stormwater and slowly release it into the existing Kingsbury Run culvert system, reducing the number of combined sewer overflows.

The storm sewer system that would be built as part of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project would be designed to meet ODOT water quality standards and NEORSD flow volume requirements. The sewer design would continue to be coordinated with ongoing NEORSD planning efforts within the project area. Construction of the depressed grassy median; the separate "storm-only" system to collect runoff; and the detention basin will reduce the total amount of stormwater runoff directed into the combined sewer system. By directing stormwater runoff away from the combined sewer system, the project would decrease the chances of combined sewer overflows, which would improve water quality.

For additional details about the potential improvements to water quality, please refer to the *Opportunity Corridor Stormwater Summary* (December 2012). This report is on the CD included with this DEIS.

The No-Build Alternative would not have any effect on water quality.

HOW WOULD LAND FROM INDUSTRIAL PROPERTIES BE ADDRESSED?

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor study area includes a large number of active and inactive industrial properties (Figure 4-32, page 4-37). Several of the properties are vacant or are no longer in industrial use; however, due to their previous uses, many of the properties in the study area could contain polluted soil or groundwater. These types of pollution are studied through Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs).

First, an ESA screening is done to determine what properties could be polluted. If needed, Phase I ESAs are done to provide more detailed research into the land, including the types of activities that took place and the materials used at the site, and the history of spills and other incidents. If the Phase I ESA shows there

▲ *Figure 4-32: The study area includes industrial properties that are vacant or no longer in use but that could contain polluted soil or groundwater.*

is a high possibility of pollution, a Phase II ESA is done to test the site and determine how much pollution may exist. The primary focus of these efforts is to identify potential liability from buying polluted properties, determine if there is any pollution that will need to be specially managed and identify related costs.

The ESA studies also help protect the public and construction workers. In some cases, contaminated material such as soil may need to be removed from a property. If this type of work is required, the details would be included in the final design plans.

ODOT completed an ESA screening and 29 Phase I ESAs for the project. Due to the large number of properties that need to be studied, ODOT could not complete all the Phase I ESAs prior to publication of this DEIS. No Phase II studies have been completed yet. Of the 29 properties studied, 16 would be affected by the preferred alternative and will require Phase II studies. An additional 26 properties will require Phase I studies. The properties requiring further study are shown on Figure 4-33, page 4-38.

All remaining Phase I and Phase II ESA studies will be completed during the final design of the project. The results of those ESAs and any requirements for material handling and disposal and worker protection would be included in the design plans for the project.

For additional details about the industrial properties in the area of the project, refer to the *Environmental Site Assessment Screening* (November 2009) and the *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Opportunity Corridor Project Area* (April 2011). These reports are on the CD included with this DEIS.

As part of a separate project, the City of Cleveland received a grant from EPA to develop a plan to assess, clean up, and reuse existing brownfield sites in the study area. This grant is part of a partnership between the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), USDOT and EPA. This partnership, called the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, helps communities meet their housing, transportation and environmental goals. The City's plan for brownfields redevelopment is being coordinated closely with the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project. This coordination would continue during final design.

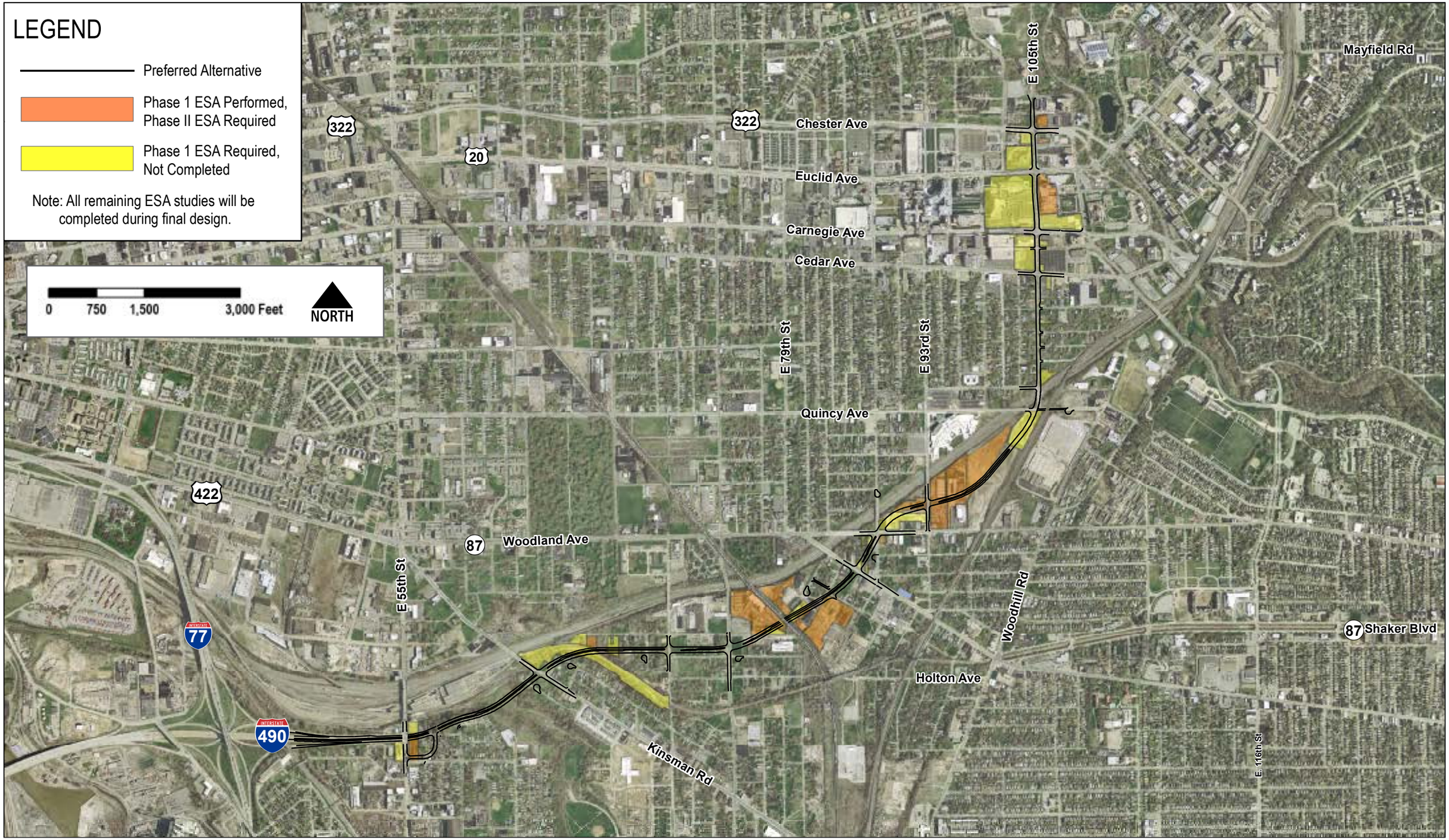
The No-Build Alternative would not affect land from industrial properties.

HOW WOULD CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES AFFECT THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY?

Short-term impacts to the community likely would occur while the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project is built, and then stop after construction is finished. Construction activities in any one area could last for 24 months or more. Potential temporary construction effects could include the following:

- Temporary use of land to build the new boulevard and other features;
- Temporary increase in noise from construction equipment and activities;

Figure 4-33: Properties Studied During Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) Screening and Phase I ESAs



- Temporary decrease in local air quality due to increased emissions from construction equipment and dust;
- Temporary travel delays and detours affecting community and emergency services; and
- Temporary interruption of existing utility services.

All construction activities would be governed by ODOT's *Construction and Material Specifications (CMS)*. In general, requirements spelled out in this document would help to minimize construction impacts. Some of these requirements include:

- **Properties and land use:** Temporary use of approximately 39.0 acres of land would be needed to build the project. Placement of construction equipment, grading, seeding, driveway reconstruction and other similar activities all can require the temporary use of land. This temporary easement is located throughout the project corridor. Temporary easements do not change land ownership; however, they do grant permission for someone other than the owner to use and access the property.
- **Noise:** Some construction equipment and activities, including pile driving and soil compaction, could increase noise in the area of the project. These impacts would be minimized in these ways:
  - » The contractor must comply with City of Cleveland noise ordinances and other local laws governing construction; and
  - » The increased truck traffic would use pre-approved haul routes to bring materials to and from the project area. These routes would be designed to minimize impacts to the community from increased truck noise and traffic.
- **Air quality:** Construction would cause a temporary increase in air pollution levels due to emissions from construction equipment or dust from construction activities. This would be minimized through dust control measures outlined in ODOT's CMS.
- **Maintenance and control of traffic:** A detailed traffic management plan would outline access to residences, businesses, public facilities, community services and local roads during construction (Figure 4-34).

  When necessary, access to the adjacent land owners would be provided using temporary driveways or connections. Local police and fire departments would be notified well in advance of construction activities to minimize disruption of services. Signage and notices published by local media will alert the public early to detours, closings and other major construction activities that could disrupt the community.
- **Utility relocations:** Relocation of existing utilities such as sewer and water lines would be included in the project. ODOT would coordinate the construction activities with the appropriate agencies to minimize damage or disrupted service. If service disruptions are expected, affected customers would be notified in advance.

The No-Build Alternative would cause no impacts from construction.

▲ *Figure 4-34: A detailed traffic management plan would outline access to residences, businesses, public facilities, community services and local roads during project construction.*

WHAT WOULD BE DONE TO KEEP TRAFFIC AND PEOPLE MOVING DURING CONSTRUCTION?

Building the project while maintaining traffic would be complicated in three areas: the crossings of East 55th Street; the NS Cleveland Main Line; and the NS Nickel Plate/GCRTA Red Line. In each of these areas, bridges would be built to allow the proposed boulevard to cross under or over the existing roadway and railroads. The new bridges would allow traffic on both the roads and the railroads to move in a timely and safe way.

I-490/East 55th Street

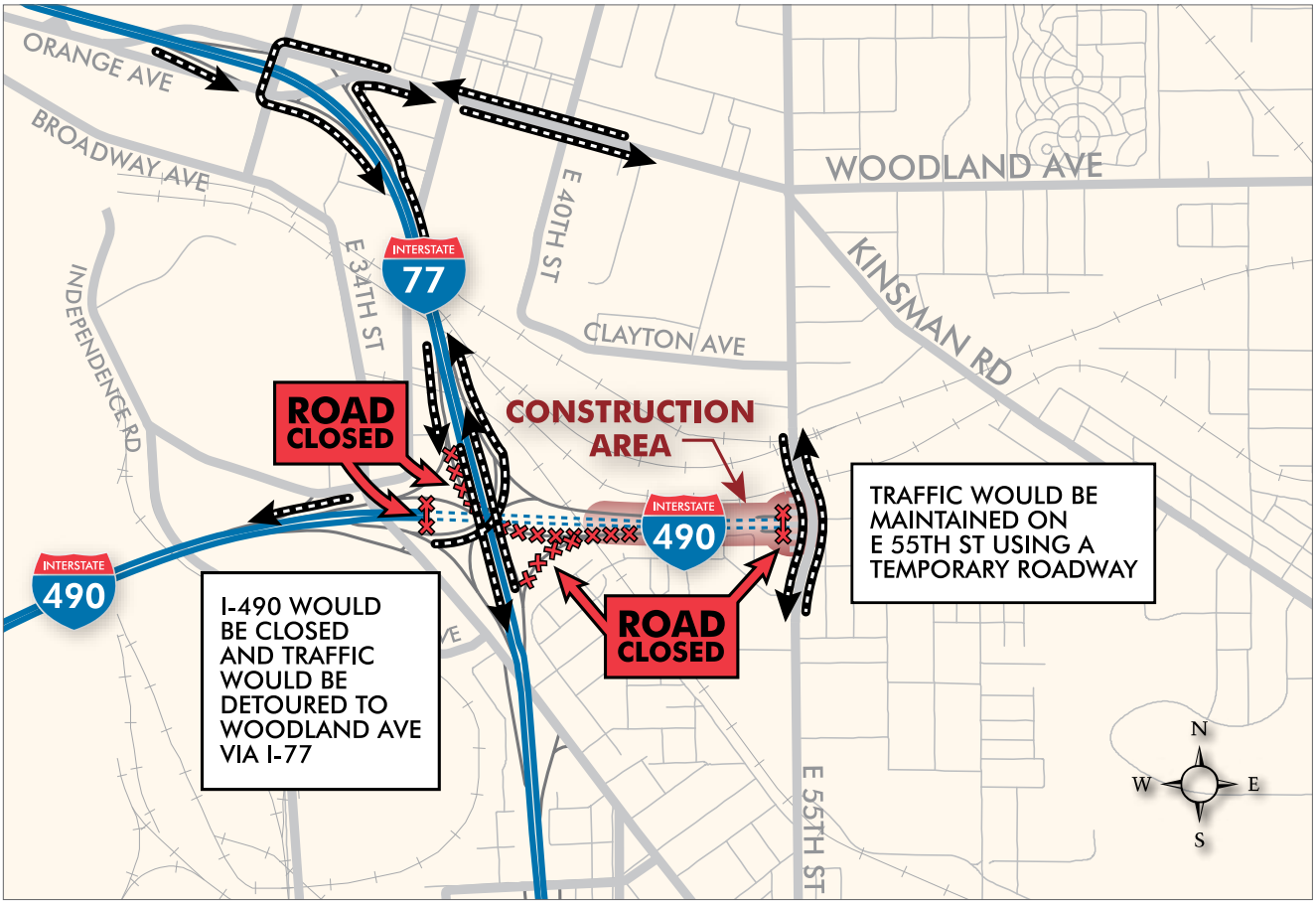
A new bridge would be built to carry East 55th Street traffic over I-490 and the proposed boulevard. During construction of the bridge, East 55th Street would have one travel lane in each direction. A temporary roadway, or runaround, would be built east of East 55th Street. At times, traffic would be required to use the temporary runaround to travel around the construction area.

Traffic along I-490 between East 55th Street and I-77 would need to be detoured during construction. Traffic would be detoured to East 55th Street using the I-77 Interchange at Woodland Avenue/East 30th Street for about 12 to 18 months. Figure 4-35 shows how traffic would move through the I-490/East 55th Street area during construction.

NS Cleveland Main Line

A new bridge would also be built to carry the boulevard under the NS Cleveland Main Line. This would require both temporary

Figure 4-35: Potential Roadway Closures and Traffic Detours During Construction



and permanent changes to the layout of the railroad tracks so that trains can continue to use the tracks during construction.

NS Nickel Plate Line and GCRTA Red Line

The project would require the existing East 105th Street Bridge over the NS Nickel Plate Line and GCRTA Red Line tracks to be reconstructed and widened. This may also require East 105th Street to be closed and traffic detoured to other roadways. This same detour was used when this bridge was reconstructed about 10 years ago. The detour is expected to last for 12 to 18 months. The final design and construction of this bridge would also be coordinated with both NS and the GCRTA. Short-term outages of passenger and freight rail service may be required to build the new bridge; however, these outages likely would occur at night during periods of less train traffic. As a result, impacts to GCRTA transit service, if any, would be minimal and short-term.

HOW COULD THE CLEVELAND OPPORTUNITY CORRIDOR PROJECT INFLUENCE THE FUTURE OF THE AREA?

The previous sections considered mainly the direct impacts of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project. Direct impacts are created by the construction and operation of the project. ODOT is also required to consider potential indirect and cumulative effects, which are impacts not directly related to the project.

- Indirect effects are impacts caused by the project, but they occur later in time or in an area that is farther away from the project. Indirect effects could be a lot of different things, but they must be "reasonably foreseeable," or highly likely to occur because the project was built. Indirect effects of this project would include changes to surrounding land use from development, and the resulting impacts of these changes on the community and natural environment.
- Cumulative effects are effects on the community or natural environment that occur from adding the impacts of one project with other past, present and likely-to-occur projects. When added together, minor impacts from several different and somewhat small projects could result in a significant or major impact on the community and natural environment.

Indirect effects of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project would include support for planned economic development by improving the transportation network, which is consistent with local redevelopment and investment efforts. The project would have an indirect effect on land use by supporting future development. The project could cause development to happen sooner or to a greater degree. However, several other things need to happen for the City to realize its future land use and economic vision. The effects of any future land use change would also largely be determined by local plans and regulations (Figure 4-36).

The City currently has a plan for future land use that shows residential areas changing over time to other uses such as manufacturing and office space. The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project could cause indirect effects by making these planned land use changes happen faster. Development resulting from the project

▲ *Figure 4-36: University Circle will influence growth and development in the study area regardless of whether the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project is built.*

▲ *Figure 4-37: The project would support the revival and redevelopment of the Forgotten Triangle area.*

could provide more job opportunities for area residents. However, it could also impact more residents and businesses, although they would be able to choose if they want to move out of the area. If this happens, replacement housing and business sites should be available in nearby neighborhoods.

Future land use changes could also impact historic resources. These impacts will be avoided or minimized through existing local, state, and federal regulations that protect historic resources. Also, all new development must be approved by the Cleveland Planning Commission and, in some cases, the neighborhoods. This will also help to avoid and minimize effects of future land use change.

The project may also have the indirect effect of generating economic activity and job opportunities, as well as supporting the infill development needed to strengthen and improve low-income and minority communities. The project would also improve regional water quality due to the construction of a separate system to handle stormwater runoff from the roadway.

The project area is urbanized with no natural habitat or threatened and endangered plants and animals. As a result, the project would not result in indirect effects to natural resources.

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project would lead to cumulative improvements to land, community and water resources. The project, which is one part of the City's overall strategy, would support the revival and redevelopment of the Forgotten Triangle area (Figure 4-37).

As part of a separate project, the City received a grant from EPA to develop a plan to assess, clean up and reuse existing brownfield sites

in the area. This grant is part of a partnership between the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), USDOT and EPA. This partnership, called the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, helps communities meet their housing, transportation and environmental goals.

The City's plan for brownfields redevelopment is being coordinated closely with the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project. Additionally, the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORSD) Green Infrastructure Plan would provide opportunities for reuse of vacant land and economic development. The cumulative effect of these coordinated efforts – including the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project - should improve the quality of life and livability of the area.

The planning and design of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project is being closely coordinated with the NEORSD plans and ongoing efforts to address regional water quality issues. The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project will provide cumulative improvements to water quality through the construction of a separate system to handle stormwater runoff. Also, the cumulative effect of future land use change resulting from the project will be improved water quality due to local regulations and other ongoing initiatives in the City of Cleveland and at NEORSD.

The project area is urbanized with no natural habitat or threatened and endangered plants and animals. As a result, the construction of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor should not result in cumulative effects to natural resources.

For additional details about the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project's potential indirect and cumulative effects, refer to the *Opportunity Corridor Indirect and Cumulative Effects Technical Memorandum* (July 2012). This report is on the CD included with this DEIS.

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Chapter 5 | PUBLIC *and* AGENCY COORDINATION

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS CHAPTER?

Gathering input from the public and other stakeholders was an important part of deciding the details of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the ways in which public and agency feedback was collected and how it changed the design of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project.

The sections below give basic information about the public involvement and agency coordination that occurred during the project development. For more information, please refer to the *Public Involvement Summary*[1] (January 2013), which is on the CD included with this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Additional information is also provided in Appendix A (Agency Coordination Documents).

WHAT IS THE PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE?

The Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Steering Committee is one group that provides input on the project. The members and roles of the steering committee have changed over time. In the early planning stages, the committee was made up mostly of businesses, political and transportation agency representatives, and leaders of community development corporations.

In 2009, residents of neighborhoods in the study area were added to the steering committee (Figure 5-1, page 5-2). The purpose of the steering committee is to represent neighborhood and business interests in the project; encourage public input and participation; and help build support for the project.

As shown in Table 5-1 on page 5-3, the steering committee had 12 meetings and workshops. At these meetings, the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) gathered helpful input about how the project could best fit within the community.

WHAT ARE CONTEXT SENSITIVE SOLUTIONS, AND HOW DO THEY APPLY TO THE CLEVELAND OPPORTUNITY CORRIDOR PROJECT?

ODOT is using a process called context sensitive solutions (CSS) to involve study area residents, business owners and the public in the design of the project (Figure 5-2, page 5-2). The goal of this process is to plan and design a roadway that fits in visually with the community and supports other types of transportation such as bus, walking, bicycling and transit.

As part of the CSS process, ODOT talked early and often with those who live, work, own businesses in or have other interests in the study area. In the early planning

[1] *This document is incorporated by reference into this DEIS.*

Figure 5-1: Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Project Steering Committee Members

- Buckeye Area Development Corp.
- Buckeye Community
- Burten Bell Carr Development Corp.
- Case Western Reserve University
- City of Cleveland
- City of Cleveland Council (Wards 5, and 12)
- Cleveland Clinic
- Cuyahoga County
- Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works
- Early Stage Partners, LP
- Fairfax Community
- Fairfax Renaissance Development Corp.
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP)
- Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA)
- Kinsman Community
- Maingate Business Development Corp.
- New Era Builders
- Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating (NOACA)
- North Shore Federation of Labor
- Ohio Department of Development
- Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
- Orlando Baking Company
- Slavic Village Development Corp.
- Slavic Village/St. Hyacinth Community
- State of Ohio
- The Cleveland Foundation
- The George Fund Foundation
- The Plain Dealer
- University Circle Community
- University Circle, Inc.
- University Hospitals

stages, ODOT had more than 50 meetings with people, businesses and organizations that could be affected by the project. The input received at these meetings helped ODOT understand the problems, needs, goals and objectives for the study area. It also helped ODOT develop the project's purpose and need statement and evaluate alternatives. Since September 2009, 12 public meetings, more than 15 business coordination meetings, five neighborhood meetings, and six steering committee meetings have been held.

The large amount of meetings held for the project has helped ODOT design a project that best meets the community's needs while reducing possible impacts. More details about how public and stakeholder input changed the design can be found later in this chapter as well as in Chapter 3 of this DEIS.

▲ *Figure 5-2: Meeting participants do a map exercise as part of ODOT's context sensitive solutions process.*

HOW WERE BUSINESSES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT?

ODOT, along with the Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP), organized a business coordination meeting at Cleveland Play House on Dec. 8, 2009. The meeting included an informal or "open house" session during which attendees could look at exhibits and review information about the project. The study team

Table 5-1: Cleveland Opportunity Corridor Steering Committee Meeting Summary

DATE	LOCATION	TOPICS DISCUSSED
May 19, 2005	NOACA Board Room 1299 Superior Ave Cleveland, OH 44114	• Project background and history • Transportation problems • Project goals and alternatives
June 16, 2005	Quincy Place 8111 Quincy Ave., Ste. 100 Cleveland, OH 44104	• Existing conditions • Planned developments • Alternatives evaluation process and criteria
Aug. 18, 2005	Quincy Place 8111 Quincy Ave., Ste. 100 Cleveland, OH 44104	• Results of alternatives evaluation • Changes to alternatives
Sept. 22, 2005	Quincy Place 8111 Quincy Ave., Ste. 100 Cleveland, OH 44104	• Coordination of planned developments and alternatives, including bridge options at I-490/East 55th Street
Nov. 10, 2005	Quincy Place 8111 Quincy Ave., Ste. 100 Cleveland, OH 44104	• Alternatives evaluation results • Draft recommendations for further study
May 15, 2009	Cleveland Plain Dealer 1801 Superior Ave. East Cleveland, OH 44114	• Reconvene steering committee • Redefine committee role • Overview of project status
Sept. 1, 2009	Greater Cleveland Partnership 100 Public Square Cleveland, OH 44113	• Overview of study process • Project goals and objectives • Summary of data collected and alternatives
March 11, 2010	Karamu House 8111 Quincy Ave. Cleveland, OH 44104	• Alternatives • Overview of public comments • Context sensitive solutions (CSS) workshop
Sept. 8, 2010	Cleveland Plain Dealer 1801 Superior Ave. East Cleveland, OH 44114	• Alternatives recommended for further study • CSS workshop
July 7, 2011	Cleveland Plain Dealer 1801 Superior Ave. East Cleveland, OH 44114	• Recommended preferred alternative • Introduction to city's brownfield study • Greater Cleveland Partnership's (GCP) economic development efforts
Nov. 16, 2011	Greater Cleveland Partnership 1240 Huron Road East, #300 Cleveland, OH 44115	• Revisions to recommended preferred alternative • Summary of October 2011 public meeting comments • Update on the city's brownfield study • Results of GCP economic development study
Nov. 29, 2012	Greater Cleveland Partnership 1240 Huron Road East, #300 Cleveland, OH 44115	• Preferred alternative, including results of engineering and environmental studies

then gave a formal presentation followed by a question and answer session. The meeting ended with more time for people to review the display boards and ask questions of the study team. Business owners and their representatives could give spoken comments to a court reporter, write their comments down on a comment sheet or email comments to the study team.

One-on-one meetings were also held with area businesses including AMCLO, Final Cut, Orlando Baking Company, Miceli's Dairy Products, Brost Foundry, Quality Stamping, ACME Krivanek Iron Works, and Forge Products. The study team also had informal talks with other businesses including Mz. De' Ledari' Unisex Salon, Danzy Discount,

Northeast Video, Harvest Day Care, McTech Corporation and Family Dollar.

Overall, no comments heard during the business meetings changed which alternatives were recommended for further study. However, the input was used to reduce impacts to existing businesses. The input from these meetings was also helpful in planning future meeting times, locations and agendas to best meet participants' needs.

More details – including meeting format, content, advertising methods, questions and comments from businesses – can be found in the *Opportunity Corridor Public Involvement Summary* on the CD included with the DEIS.

HOW DID PROJECT TEAM REACH OUT TO NEIGHBORHOODS?

The study team used several tools to reach out to neighborhood residents and business owners. The purpose was to let the community know about the project, and to provide many chances to give input. The tools included fliers posted at places such as churches, community centers and recreational centers; written and verbal surveys; questionnaires; map and design exercises; one-on-one meetings; email blasts; media advisories; direct mailings; a project website; newspaper advertisements; and press releases. The study team also interviewed residents and workers to understand the role of local businesses within each neighborhood.

Members of the study team were specialized in neighborhood outreach and helped to plan outreach efforts and to determine how well they were working. Throughout the study, ODOT actively monitored the public involvement program and made changes when necessary to make sure the community was kept up to date and given chances to offer meaningful input. For example, the study team visited libraries, recreational centers, apartment complexes, and places of worship to talk with residents and workers about the project and the best ways to keep them informed. The study team used the feedback from these discussions when planning future public involvement efforts. The refinements included the following:

- Meeting sites were located as close as possible to residents and businesses;
- Meetings were held during the day to reduce security concerns, as well as to serve the elderly and small business owners that found it hard to attend during lunch and evening hours;
- Font sizes were increased to improve readability of project newsletters, presentations, and meeting exhibits;
- Newsletters were designed to use less words and more graphics;
- The mailing list was expanded using U.S. postal service data to send project-related information to both property owners and tenants; and
- Stamps were available at all public meetings so that participants could mail back comment forms without having to buy stamps.

One of the key ways that the study team reached out to neighborhoods was through neighborhood meetings. Between November 2009 and March 2010, ODOT held meetings in each of the five neighborhoods in the study area, including the Fairfax, University Circle, Slavic Village, Kinsman, and Buckeye neighborhoods. The same meeting format was used each time. The primary purpose was to share project information and allow attendees to ask questions. These meetings helped ODOT better understand the community, including its interests and concerns.

When time allowed, attendees broke into small groups with study team members to help ODOT gather even more input. The study team also led a map exercise and a CSS exercise, and participants filled out individual questionnaires.

People who attended the meetings were asked to give comments at the meeting or to mail

them later using a self-mailer form with pre-paid postage. These comments were evaluated by ODOT as the project moved along.

More details about the neighborhood outreach efforts can be found in the *Opportunity Corridor Public Involvement Summary* on the CD included with the DEIS.

HOW WAS THE GENERAL PUBLIC INVOLVED?

ODOT held several public meetings to allow people who live, work in and travel through the study area to be part of the decision-making process. An overview of the public meetings follows below.

Details about the public meetings are found in the *Opportunity Corridor Public Involvement Summary* on the CD included with the DEIS.

September 2009 public meetings

ODOT held two public meetings on Sept. 29, 2009 – one in the daytime and the other in the evening, allowing more people to attend. The evening meeting was for people who live in the study area and work during the day. The daytime meeting was held at Cleveland Play House from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. so that people who work in and around the study area could attend during lunch hours. The evening public meeting was held at Mt. Sinai Baptist Church, which is in the central part of the study area.

The meetings were advertised via newspaper ads, media advisories, press releases, radio ads and fliers mailed directly to homes and businesses.

Each of the public meetings had an informal or "open house" session during which people could look at exhibits and review information about the project. The study team then gave a formal presentation followed by a question and answer session. The meetings ended with more time for people to review the display boards and ask questions of the study team. Meeting attendees could give spoken comments to a court reporter, write their comments down on a comment sheet or email comments to the study team.

October 2010 public meetings

A second series of public meetings was held from Oct. 5 through 7, 2010. ODOT considered the strengths and weaknesses of the first round of public meetings to improve coordination and communication during this second series. To increase public attendance, six meetings were held over three days during morning, midday, afternoon and evening time periods. The meetings – which had the same format and presented the same information – were held at four different locations within or close to the study area. The October 2010 public meetings schedule is shown in Table 5-2.

The meetings were advertised in many ways, including email blasts, media advisories, press releases, newspaper ads, and a project newsletter sent out before the meetings (Figure 5-3, page 5-6).

Table 5-2: October 2010 Public Meetings Summary

DATE	TIME	PLACE	ADDRESS
Tuesday, Oct. 5, 2010	6 p.m. to 8 p.m.	Mt. Sinai Baptist Church	7510 Woodland Ave.
Wednesday, Oct. 6, 2010	8 a.m. to 10 a.m.	Kenneth L. Johnson Recreation Center	9206 Woodland Ave.
	11 a.m. to 1 p.m.		
	6 p.m. to 8 p.m.	Edgewood Park	3215 E. 55th St.
Thursday, Oct. 7, 2010	4 p.m. to p.m.	John Hay High School	2075 Stokes Blvd.
	6 p.m. to 8 p.m.		

▲ *Figure 5-3: Cover of the fall 2010 Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project newsletter.*

Each of the public meetings included an informal or "open house" session during which people could look at exhibits and review information about the project. The study team then gave a formal presentation followed by a question and answer session that was recorded by a court reporter. The meetings ended with more time for people to review the display boards and ask questions of the study team. Meeting attendees could give spoken comments to a court reporter; write their comments down on a comment sheet; email comments to the study team; or mail comments later using a self-mailer form with pre-paid postage. The public was given up to two weeks after the meetings to submit comments about the project.

Before the meetings, copies of the September 2010 newsletter and the Conceptual Alternatives Study were made available at the Woodland, Martin Luther King Jr., and Garden Valley branches of the Cleveland Public Library to give people more chances to see the project information and give comments. After the meetings, the presentation, exhibits and comment sheet were also posted on the project website so that people who could not go to a meeting could review the materials and give comments.

July 2011 public meetings

A third series of public meetings was held July 26, 27 and 28, 2011. The meetings were scheduled at three different locations near the study area and at different times of the day. The same exhibits and presentations were used at all meetings. The July 2011 public meetings schedule is shown in Table 5-3.

The meetings were advertised using media advisories, newspaper ads, email blasts, and fliers mailed directly to homes and businesses and posted in public places. Each of the public meetings had an informal or "open house" session during which people could look at exhibits and review information about the project. A computer was also set-up to play a video of how traffic would use the proposed

Table 5-3: July 2011 Public Meetings Summary

DATE	TIME	PLACE	ADDRESS
Tuesday, July 26, 2011	2 p.m. to 4 p.m. 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.	Calvary Hill Baptist Church	2171 E. 103rd St.
Wednesday, July 27, 2011	6 p.m. to 8 p.m.	Elizabeth Baptist Church	6114 Francis Ave.
Thursday, July 28, 2011	6 p.m. to 8 p.m.	Mt. Sinai Baptist Church	7510 Woodland Ave.

"quadrant roadway" – a short new roadway that would be built near East 59th Street to route traffic between East 55th Street and the proposed boulevard. The study team then gave a formal presentation followed by a question and answer session that was recorded by a court reporter. The meetings ended with more time for people to review the display boards and ask questions of the study team.

Meeting attendees could give spoken comments to a court reporter; write their comments down on a comment sheet; email comments to the study team; or mail comments later using a self-mailer form with pre-paid postage. After the meetings, the public was given up to two weeks to submit comments about the project. After the meetings, the presentation, exhibits, project brochure, traffic simulation and comment sheet were also posted on the project website so that people who could not go to a meeting could review the materials and give comments.

WHAT OTHER TOOLS WERE USED TO COMMUNICATE ABOUT THE PROJECT?

The public involvement program for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project was designed to provide as many chances as possible for people to provide input and be part of the decisions that could affect them. In addition to face-to-face meetings, several other tools and outreach methods were used. A brief summary of these is included below:

- **Project mailing list:** Both the Cuyahoga County parcel database and U.S. Postal Service mail carrier route information were used to build a mailing list for the project. The list was used to confirm that homes and businesses within the study area received direct project mailings. Property owners who were not residents or tenants in the study area also received project information at their mailing addresses. A copy of the project mailing list can be found in the *Opportunity Corridor Public Involvement Summary*, which is on the CD included with the DEIS.

- **Meeting advertisements:** In addition to direct mailings, and public notices and advertisements published in the local newspapers, ODOT used fliers and press releases to inform the public about upcoming public meetings. Fliers were distributed to community development corporations, multifamily residential buildings, public housing complexes, community facilities such as public libraries and recreation centers, and places of worship. ODOT also coordinated with community development corporations to distribute public meeting notices through email blasts. Copies of the meeting advertisements can be found in the *Opportunity Corridor Public Involvement Summary*, which is on the CD included with this DEIS.

- **Project website (Figure 5-4):** The project website – www.BuckeyeTraffic.org/OpportunityCorridor – was used to provide project and schedule updates and to announce project meetings. Handouts, exhibits and presentations from neighborhood and public meetings were also posted to the website. The project website included contact information and copies of project comment forms. All public comments submitted through the website were evaluated by ODOT and summarized (with responses) in the *Opportunity Corridor Public Involvement Summary*, which is on the CD included with this DEIS.

▲ *Figure 5-4: Nov. 28. 2012, screen capture from the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project website, www.BuckeyeTraffic.org/OpportunityCorridor.*

- **Newsletters and brochures:** ODOT also developed newsletters and brochures to provide project updates to area residents and businesses. These were passed out at public meetings, posted to the project website, and mailed directly to homes and businesses. The newsletters and brochures can be found in the *Opportunity Corridor Public Involvement Summary*, which is on the CD included with this DEIS. Below are descriptions of the two newsletters and one brochure that were published for the project:

  - **September 2010 newsletter** – Summarized the Conceptual Alternatives Study and announced the October 2010 public meetings. The newsletter was mailed to the project mailing list. Copies of the newsletter were left with the study area community development corporations, the ODOT District 12 office, and the Woodland, Martin Luther King Jr. and Garden Valley branches of the Cleveland Public Library. It was also posted on the project website.

  - **July 2011 brochure** – Summarized the work completed since the October 2010 public meetings, and included a "take away" map of the recommended preferred alternative. The brochure was given to people at the July 2011 public meetings. It was also posted on the project website.

  - **Fall 2012 newsletter** – Summarized the work completed and changes to the project since the public meetings in July 2011. The newsletter was mailed to the project mailing list and posted on the project website in October 2012.

WHAT AGENCIES HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT?

As part of developing this DEIS, ODOT contacted local, state and federal agencies to gain their feedback on and approval for different parts of the project. These coordination efforts are summarized in Table 5-4, page 5-9.

The study team also coordinated with the City of Cleveland and the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORSD) on several design decisions, including the path of the road and stormwater drainage. Input from the city, NEORSD and the other agencies listed in Table 5-4 has been incorporated into the design and considered as part of the impacts discussed in Chapters 3 and 4 of this DEIS. Copies of the agency coordination documents are on the CD included with this DEIS.

WHAT ABOUT THE PROJECT HAS CHANGED BECAUSE OF AGENCY AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT?

Feedback received from agencies, the public and other stakeholders led to design changes to reduce impacts, improve the look of the roadway and best meet the community's priorities and needs. These changes are discussed in detail in Chapter 3 (page 3-3). Agency coordination has also helped to shape the mitigation measures and provide added benefits to the community (Chapter 4, pages 4-28 through 4-30).

ARE THERE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR AGENCY AND PUBLIC COMMENT?

Publication of this DEIS is a major milestone for the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project. Agencies and the public have the opportunity to review the DEIS and other project information, and provide their comments to ODOT.

A public hearing is scheduled during this review period to allow people to talk with the planners, engineers and officials who have been directly involved with the project. People can provide their comments publicly at the hearing or in a written statement. The comment period for the DEIS must last for a minimum of 45 days, and it will end no sooner than 30 days after the public hearing.

After the comment period, ODOT will review all of the received input. If necessary, ODOT

Table 5-4: Summary of Agency Coordination

AGENCY	TOPIC	DATE(S) OF COORDINATION	
Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA)	Air Quality	• Nov. 13, 2012 • Nov. 21, 2012	• Dec. 4, 2012
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Participating Agency Coordination*	• Aug. 31, 2010 • Jan. 23, 2013	• Feb. 5, 2013 • Jun. 27, 2013 • Jul. 2, 2013
	Air Quality	• Sept. 27, 2010	• Oct. 21, 2010
City of Cleveland	Kenneth L. Johnson Recreation Center	• Sept. 12, 2012	• Sept. 24, 2012
	Historic and Archaeological Resources	• Aug. 26, 2011	
Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR)	Kenneth L. Johnson Recreation Center	• June 13, 2012	• July 5, 2012
	Ecological Resources	• Sept. 29, 2009	
Ohio Historic Preservation Office (OHPO)	Historic and Archaeological Resources	• April 1, 2010 • May 19, 2010 • May 29, 2010 • June 18, 2010 • Aug. 18, 2011 • Aug. 26, 2011	• Sept. 8, 2011 • Dec. 1, 2011 • Dec 5, 2011 • Nov. 29, 2012 • Dec. 18, 2012
Cleveland Hungarian Heritage Society	Historic and Archaeological Resources	• May 19, 2010	• Aug. 26, 2011
Fairfax Development Corporation	Historic and Archaeological Resources	• July 28, 2011 • Aug. 9, 2011	• Aug. 26, 2011
Western Reserve Historical Society	Historic and Archaeological Resources	• Aug. 26, 2011	
Ohio Historical Society	Historic and Archaeological Resources	• Aug. 26, 2011	
Cleveland Landmarks Commission	Historic and Archaeological Resources	• Aug. 26, 2011	
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP)	Participating Agency Coordination*	• Jan. 23, 2013 • Feb. 27, 2013	• April 15, 2013
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)	Participating Agency Coordination*	• Jan. 23, 2013	• Jan. 30, 2013
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)	Participating Agency Coordination*	• Jan. 23, 2013 • Feb. 5, 2013	• Jun. 27, 2013 • Jul. 16, 2013
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE)	Participating Agency Coordination*	• Jan. 23, 2013 • Feb. 27, 2013 • April 17, 2013	• April 19, 2013 • Jun. 27, 2013 • Jul. 19, 2013
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	Participating Agency Coordination*	• Jan. 23, 2013 • Feb. 27, 2013	• March 18, 2013 • Jun. 27, 2013 • Jul. 15, 2013
U.S. Department of Interior (DOI)	Participating Agency Coordination*	• Jan. 23, 2013 • Jan. 29, 2013	• Jun. 27, 2013 • Jul. 1, 2013
U.S. Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)	Participating Agency Coordination*	• Jan. 23, 2013 • Feb. 15, 2013 • April 15, 2013	• April 18, 2013 • Jun. 27, 2013 • Jul. 19, 2013
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	Participating Agency Coordination*	• Jan. 23, 2013 • Feb. 27, 2013	• April 17, 2013 • April 19, 2013 • Jun. 27, 2013 • Jul. 17, 2013

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will make changes to the project in response to comments and concerns.

The Final EIS (FEIS) will address DEIS comments and describe resulting changes to the preferred alternative. FHWA will then publish a Record of Decision (ROD) that represents formal federal approval of the EIS and preferred alternative. For the Opportunity Corridor project, the FEIS and ROD may be completed at the same time.

Approval of the ROD also allows ODOT to begin final design, land acquisition and construction as funding becomes available.

Chapter 6 | ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS *and* MITIGATION

WHAT WILL BE DONE TO REDUCE OR MITIGATE THE IMPACTS OF THE CLEVELAND OPPORTUNITY CORRIDOR PROJECT?

The following sections summarize the steps that will be taken to reduce or mitigate the impacts of the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project. The project sponsor will make sure that the final plan package includes the necessary engineering drawings, notes and specifications to carry out the environmental commitments outlined in this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). It is possible that additional commitments could be identified based on comments received on the DEIS or at the public hearing. If this happens, the additional commitments will be discussed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

Kenneth L. Johnson (Woodland) Recreational Center

During construction, the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project would need about 0.19 acres (8,420 square feet) of temporary easement from the planned expansion area of the Kenneth L. Johnson (Woodland) Recreational Center, 9206 Woodland Ave. The land would only be needed for about six months for grading and seeding that would take place when Buckeye Road and Woodland Avenue are widened and when the new boulevard is built.

To minimize impacts to the rec center, the following items will be included in the final design plans:

- The plans will require the contractor to protect the rec center areas and users with warnings signs, gates, barricades or fences during construction;
- Access to the rec center will be maintained at all times. The contractor will be required to closely coordinate the construction schedule with the City of Cleveland. Two weeks before the construction starts, the contractor will notify the City, in writing, of the occupation dates;
- Any disturbed areas will be put back to a condition at least as good as or better than what was there before construction started;
- No staging and/or storage of construction equipment will be on the rec center property; and
- If unexpected work on the rec center property is needed, advance notice will be given to the City of Cleveland and ODOT to decide if additional coordination is needed.

During final design, the project sponsor will coordinate with the National Park Service (NPS) through the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Ohio

▲ *Figure 6-1: Stormwater management will continue to be coordinated with the Northeast Ohio Sewer District.*

Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) for any anticipated Section 6(f) impacts to the rec center. This coordination will occur approximately one to two years before the plans are finalized.

Stormwater

An Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit will be obtained before construction activities occur. The contractor will fully follow the regulations and conditions outlined in the permit. A Stormater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be prepared by the contractor. The contractor will also follow Best Management Practices (BMPs) for sediment and erosion control during construction and after construction according to ODOT's Construction and Material Specifications. Coordination with OEPA and Northeast Ohio Sewer District (NEORSD) will continue during final design.

Industrial properties (regulated materials)

During final design, the project sponsor will complete the remaining Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) for the properties affected by the proposed project. Any properties recommended for further study will also be evaluated through Phase II ESAs. The results of those studies, including any requirements for material handling and disposal and worker protection, will be included in the design plans for the project.

Traffic noise

Noise walls are recommended in three areas to mitigate increased traffic noise:

- South side of the boulevard between 71st Street and 75th Street
  - » Approximate length: 610 feet
  - » Height range: 11 to 14 feet
- North side of the boulevard between GCRTA Blue-Green Line and 75th Street
  - » Approximate length: 540 feet
  - » Height range: 13 feet
- North side of the boulevard between Evins Avenue and Buckeye Road
  - » Approximate length: 500 feet
  - » Height range: 13 feet

The final decision about whether to build the noise walls will not be made until the project is in its final design stage. ODOT will gather input from residents and property owners who

▲ *Figure 6-2: The plans will include requirements for the disposal of regulated materials.*

would be affected by the noise walls. ODOT will decide whether to build the noise walls based on the desires of the affected people. If noise walls are desired, the people who are affected will help decide how the walls will look on their side of the wall.

Temporary noise impacts from construction activities will be minimized through the use of pre-approved haul routes to bring materials to/from the project. These routes will be designed to minimize impacts to the community. The contractor must comply with City of Cleveland noise ordinances and other local laws governing construction.

Air quality

State and local regulations regarding dust control will be followed to minimize air quality impacts during construction. Emissions from construction activities will be minimized through dust control measures outlined in ODOT's *Construction and Material Specifications.*

Traffic maintenance

As part of final design, a maintenance of traffic plan will prepared to provide access to residences, businesses, public facilities, community services, and local roads during construction. Local police and fire departments will be notified in advance of construction activities to allow for planning to minimize disruption of community and emergency services. Signs will be used, and local media will be contacted to provide early notice of detours, closings and other major construction activities that could disrupt the community.

Public involvement

As part of the context sensitive solutions (CSS) process, public involvement will continue during final design to determine locations and details of community-focused design features. The public will also give input on details to improve the look of the study area such as colored concrete and form liners. Public involvement will be conducted during the construction phase according to ODOT District 12's communication plan for major projects.

▲ *Figure 6-3: Utility relocations will be coordinated to minimize inconvenience to customers.*

Utility relocations

Utility relocations will be coordinated between the contractor and the utility owners to avoid and/or minimize inconvenience to customers. Upon the contract award, the coordination of necessary relocations with the utilities will become the responsibility of the contractor.

Environmental justice

The following measures are proposed to mitigate the impacts of the project and provide added benefits to the local community:

- ODOT will build two pedestrian/bike bridges: one at East 59th Street and one at East 89th Street.
- ODOT will implement a voluntary residential relocation program to allow some residents whose homes are not directly impacted by the project to be eligible for relocation assistance.
- ODOT will contribute $500,000 toward the planned expansion of the Kenneth L. Johnson (Woodland) Recreational Center.
- For required relocations, ODOT will work to provide replacement housing that has similar

access to public transit, as long as those options are currently available in the housing market. ODOT will also make all reasonable efforts to relocate residents within the same neighborhood, if that is what they desire.

ODOT will present other possible mitigation and enhancement measures during the DEIS review period and at the public hearing (pages 4-29 and 4-30). Based on the comments received, additional measures may be incorporated into the project.

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